







# The Violent Men





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*THE*  
**Violent Men**

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*A Study of* HUMAN RELATIONS  
*in the*  
*FIRST AMERICAN CONGRESS*  
*by*  
*Cornelia Meigs*

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To  
M.M.G.  
and  
A.W.G.  
*At whose house  
this book  
began.*



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## CHAPTER I

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### *The Congress*

IN a time not so much of confusion, but of realization of how great are our national responsibilities, of seeing them spread in widening circles even as the inner ones are met—in such a time it is necessary for Americans to muster all their resources of wisdom and experience. Not the least of these is that recollection, remote and small now, but with the strong focus of history upon it, of a momentous period when a little group of our fellow citizens brought to a definition that first concept of American freedom which was really the vision of liberty for all mankind. The scene of their exertions was a white-paneled room of no very great proportions but of singular beauty, looking out on the quiet square of a provincial city. An eminent scientist who passed often through the hall to climb the stairs, would catch glimpses through an opening or closing door, of rows of dark or powdered heads, of faces turned to listen or approve. David Rittenhouse, Philadelphia's great astronomer, as he went up to his self-appointed task of winding and regulating the big clock under the high-swung bell, felt that there was nothing mean about such labor, considering the nature of the deliberations which were going on below.

There in the quiet east room, to the light of wax candles burning yellow in the winter dark, to the sound of crackling fires, or through the heavy pall of sea-level summer heat, these men carried on the work to which they had set their hands and brought it to its hard-won but inevitable end. Perhaps it is only now, in a generation which has faced commensurate trials and is still meeting commensurately difficult problems, that we can



look back at last with a truly appraising eye on the nature and magnitude of their task.

It has long been our easy custom to dwell on the errors of that first gathering which we call the Continental Congress, and to say that they sat, idle and wrangling, while Washington and his intrepid army defended the American cause in the field. The military story is the easier of the two to follow; Washington's record is unforgettable, as is that of the small body of fighting patriots which made up the invincible core of the Revolutionary forces. The record of this other, the political struggle, is more obscure; its dramatic moments have been less definitely recounted, its disappointments, its sacrifices, its moments of heroic boldness, have not all of them been made clear to us. Yet the surrender of Burgoyne at Saratoga, the victory of Yorktown with Cornwallis yielding up his sword and the British military band playing "The World Turned Upside Down," were lesser moments and lesser events than the days on which certain great matters were debated in Independence Hall and the occasions when decisions were made which set the feet of the world on new pathways forever. This was accomplished by a company of between fifty and sixty serious gentlemen standing for thirteen diverse British colonies and, all unwittingly, representing the sundry American millions who were yet to come. What these men believed and what they taught others to believe constituted the very cause for which Washington and his army were so magnificently fighting.

They came together in a great emergency at that first gathering in the city of Philadelphia; every colony had sent her very best. History has known few more brilliant gatherings than on that first occasion; American history has never, so far, repeated such an accomplishment. Scarcely any man of real political talent or leadership in the thirteen colonies but was present. So it was at first, but it could not be for long. The very nature of the duty of the Congress tended to drain away the strength of

that first political body. An army was organized, and Washington, Schuyler, and Sullivan left at once, to be followed later by Dickinson, McKean, and many others of lesser importance. State governments, state constitutions, had to be formed and, under the plan of the Confederation, the responsibilities of state governments were very great. Governors, speakers of assemblies, heads of the judiciary, went home to what seemed more pressing duties. As John Adams commented, looking about to count the few familiar faces,

"The rest are dead, resigned, deserted, or cut up into governors, etc. at home."

Years dragged on and members of the Congress were ruined by long absence from home or from business. The enemy sought out their dwellings to burn them down, to make fugitives of the women and children left behind. There was a period of low level, when the first leaders were gone, either to other necessary work or because they had grown old or gone into bankruptcy in the service of their country. There was a time when the Congress, driven hither and yon by the presence of the invading enemy, shrank from its ordinary number of fifty-five to less than twenty men. But the real spark of ardor was never quenched; Philadelphia was recovered, errors were repaired, new men came in. The day of Samuel and John Adams and Richard Henry Lee passed; the day of James Madison and Alexander Hamilton began. The most unfortunate venture of all, the organization of the Confederation, which John Adams called, even in anticipation, a "rope of sand," was finally seen in its true light as an instrument which dispersed the great gifts of leadership through smaller offices instead of bringing them together for common action.

As these men went forward, their great task was not so much the debating of military strategy, the voting of funds and the discovering where to find them, the arranging for the importation of gunpowder and the casting of cannon. It was their re-

sponsibility to hammer out, in all the process of parliamentary debate, the true understanding of what constitutes the freedom of man and what are his inalienable rights. These men of Philadelphia did not evolve those concepts from the very beginning; political philosophers before them had already formulated the ideas of human freedom in theory, and the first transmutation of theory into practical belief came under the bold strokes of debating Englishmen. It should not be forgotten in America that the floor of the House of Commons and the tapestry-hung chamber of the House of Lords saw the first public championship of those rights which we now know to be a part of life itself. The combined eloquence of those great men to whom Americans have long owed a debt of gratitude, the logic and fervor of Burke and Shelburne, of Fox and Pitt and John Wilkes and all those other friends of America, were heard in this same period, calling for recognition of the essential liberties of all Englishmen. It was the part of the American Congress to go forward from the point where the others were silenced, and by their bold philosophy and constructive debate to come to a final conclusion as to what could be claimed from life, from government, and from God as man's inviolable liberty. And, further, it was largely men who had sat through the Continental Congress for a long stretch of years, who had learned hard lessons in that hazardous and laborious school of statesmanship, who gathered again as the Constitutional Convention. It was they who developed the instrument which built, upon the foundation of established liberty, the final structure of democratic government.

Only one man witnessed the whole process of that evolution. Benjamin Franklin, during his long sojourn in London, often sat in the visitors' galleries in Westminster Palace, sometimes with his young friend, Josiah Quincy, beside him, to listen to the great debates which attacked and defended American liberties. Later he took his place in the Congress, pondering much

and saying little, sometimes even falling asleep when the speeches were overlong or arrived nowhere. He joined not at all in the hot arguments over independence, but it was his careful eye that went over the impassioned document that was struck off by his youthful colleague, Thomas Jefferson, and his hand which added those corrections which can still be seen. He became, in his old age, a member of the Constitutional Convention, where he lent his presence, his prestige, and his great talent for the reconciliation of differing spirits. Here, still, he spoke in public very little. But at the very end, when the long task was complete and the results were about to be announced to America and to a listening, critical world, Benjamin Franklin voiced his real opinion, the summary of fifteen years of political observation. The Constitution, he began by declaring, did not suit his views exactly, but, so he thought, no better one could have been achieved. For, he said,

“When you assemble a number of men to have the advantage of their joint wisdom, you inevitably assemble with those men all their prejudices, their passions, their errors of opinion, their local interests and their selfish views.”

He had lived to see the wisdom of men emerge from the confusions and bitter contentions that sprang from their lesser motives. He had seen that those human passions represent not the errors of a single group of men, but the human weakness of democracy itself. And their common wisdom, the greatness of truth triumphing over the small differences in the slow shaping of a common thought, represents, equally, democracy's true glory. There were many men, in the latter years of the eighteenth century, who thought democracy was impossible—even many Americans. In the light of the present, when the responsibility of free government is the responsibility of civilization itself, it may be illuminating now to review in human detail one chapter of that story of the first Congress, the first experiment where common action succeeded bewildering diversity and took shape,

inevitably took shape, in the midst of a myriad conflicting interests and passions and beliefs. That first chapter begins in the spring of 1774 and ends on July fourth, two years later, a stretch of years brief indeed to weigh so heavily in the balance of history.

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## CHAPTER II

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### *The Invitation*

BY the chance of wind and weather, it was on Friday, the thirteenth of May, in the year 1774 that General Thomas Gage, the new Governor of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay, landed from the *Lively* frigate at Castle William in Boston Harbor. Three days earlier a certain Captain Jenkins had arrived with the official mandate of Parliament, decreeing that the port of Boston was to be closed, commerce was to be completely suspended, and the seat of government was to be moved to Salem, all on account of the late misdemeanors concerning the East India Company's tea. General Gage found, however, that the capital, in a certain sense, had moved automatically to Castle William since, after the arrival of the Parliamentary order, Governor Hutchinson had found the city too hot to hold him. He had transferred his person to the fortress in the harbor and was here awaiting the very welcome relief from his duties as representative of the King's authority over Massachusetts.

Even as Gage came to shore and began preparing to land his considerable military escort, brought to enforce the new decrees, Boston was making ready to take her own measures. A town meeting was in progress, with Mr. Samuel Adams as moderator and with the men of Boston in deep discussion over the parlous state of affairs in Massachusetts. After certain resolutions had been completed and the citizens of Boston had dispersed, Adams, Hancock, and Cushing sat late over their letters to the key men in the colonies south of them. By means of the Committees of Correspondence, recently organized between colony and colony, but already thoroughly active, they knew exactly to whom to

appeal. This act of Parliament was a matter in which Massachusetts must have counsel, and communication with their advisers must be accomplished at once. A courier was making ready to take the road next morning.

There was a member of the House of Commons, one Mr. Rigby, who, as he denounced the insubordinate actions of the Americans, declared that they had even presumed to set up their own system of communication and had special messengers "to carry their traitorous correspondence" from one town or colony to another. Rigby, to his own amazement, might even have lived to know the name of at least one of those riders who galloped ahead of the American Revolution, for the struggle was not yet very old before many of those concerned had heard of Paul Revere. And the eye of history may well follow that mounted figure passing through the rugged hills of Massachusetts, down the stony ravines of Connecticut, over the post roads of New York into the level reaches of New Jersey. Nearly a year before the ride to Lexington and Concord, Paul Revere was bearing a portentous message of another kind. On the famous night he rode to give warning of hostilities definitely begun; on this earlier journey he traveled through a peaceful countryside, carrying letters which were to be part of the very foundation of America's future.

It had been a reluctant spring, with the snow lying late over New England; apple trees on the upper ridges showed scarcely a sign of tight-rolled buds, and fields still lay behind the stone walls in their heavy winter clods. But as he went further and further southward, the turned brown earth was warm in the sun and the green landscape leveled and broadened before him. Paul Revere's journeys had never taken him so deep into the heart of his country before, and this was the most verdant landscape his eyes had ever beheld. He saw men plowing the flat New Jersey fields with horses, rather than with the oxen to which New Englanders were used. In the rolling farm country of Pennsyl-

vania, the broad stone houses and the barns supported on white-washed pillars were something utterly new to him. Yet no farming countryside is ever entirely different from another, for here, everywhere, were men sowing seed with the same slow pace and the same swing of the arm that did not change for any region of the earth, that had prevailed since the days of the parables and before.

He inspected, hastily, town after town also, with, among them, very little resemblance to his own Boston. Across the ferry at New York, through Elizabeth Town and Princeton went the appointed way, over another ferry to cross the Delaware at Trent Town, and so southward still to Philadelphia. Grainfields went up to the very edge of the city, as he observed while he pushed his weary horse along the last miles of the Frankford road. On entering the town and turning down the street which would take him to the London Coffee House, he caught sight of masts and high white topsails above the roofs, for the broad Delaware was full of shipping. How strange it was to see them with miles of green landscape for a background. It was Thursday, the nineteenth of May, when he drew up in the square before the Coffee House and got down to unbuckle his saddlebags.

The London Coffee House, at the southwest corner of Front and Market Streets, was the place of gathering when mail was expected. Here letters were received, messages were exchanged, newspapers passed from hand to hand, news of the country to the north and the south was first made known. And today, even though this was not an official mail rider who had arrived, word spread quickly that most important tidings had come in and that there were letters from Massachusetts for Mr. Thomas Mifflin, Mr. Joseph Reed, and Mr. Charles Thomson. To an intently listening audience the letters were read aloud, Cushing's and Adams's, giving news of the decree that Boston had received her official sentence, that her trade was put to an end, her customhouse taken to Marblehead, and the General Court, her legislative body, or-



dered to meet in Salem. All this was to continue until the East India Company should be paid for the tea which, last December, had floated away on the waters of Boston Harbor and washed up in the mouths of the tidal creeks. The resolutions of the town meeting followed.

"It is the opinion of this Town," the principal paragraph stated, "that if the other colonies come into a joint resolution to stop all importations from Great Britain and exportations to Great Britain and every part of the West Indies, till the Act of blocking up this harbor be repealed, the same will prove the salvation of North America."

Rhode Island had got its communication and so had New York, by the hand also of Paul Revere. Philadelphia was to be the farthest extent of his journey, and Pennsylvania was asked, for her part, to transmit the news and the resolutions to the provinces to the southward. "We ask the advice of our sister colonies," the letters went on, for Massachusetts was scarcely in a position to make a stand, moral or military, against the whole power of Great Britain. On what the others decided would depend the course and the fate of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay. And it was plain to every thinking man present that the later history of every colony of the thirteen would be very little different from that of Massachusetts.

"A joint resolution to stop all importations from Great Britain." The announcement of such a proposal could well carry eyes from face to face, reading the expressions of doubt, disapproval, or high excitement. Here were all parties represented and all the interests of a city, of a province already deeply divided over its own controversies and utterly unused to considering problems beyond its own. Boston was asking them for common action, not only among themselves but among all the colonies, when such a thing had never been even considered before. The words of the letters from Massachusetts meant only one thing, but that thing was not yet named.

The idea of a congress was everywhere in the air, yet nowhere had crystallized into a definite proposal. The Stamp Act Congress years ago had been a representation of a certain number of the colonies, and had apparently accomplished its end, for the decree had been repealed. But thinking persons realized now that the Stamp Act had been something of an experiment, which, with a change in cabinet ministers, had easily been swept away. The present list of grievances, of which the Boston Port Bill was only one, the deep questioning over the jurisdiction of Parliament in the colonies, made this a very different affair. Could men form a real union when the separate colonies had so little knowledge of one another and where, even in Pennsylvania, in Philadelphia, within that group there in the Coffee House there were those who felt so differently?

Here were men from the large body of affluent merchants whose whole prosperity, whose entire easy, comfortable way of living would collapse under the impact of resistance and force. Most prominent among them were the Friends, "the people called Quakers," whose lifelong principles, moreover, made them turn their faces against war and violence. There were even in this room also the smaller tradesmen and mechanics, the humbler men; there were those who had friends and connections in the western counties where talk of liberty was louder, where there were simpler hearts and fewer encumbering possessions. And here in Pennsylvania, besides economic interests and principles, there were the political alignments of two very definite political parties. They were those who wanted, and those who resisted, a complete change in the existing proprietary and illogical form of government. It worked certain political injustices but also, by sheer custom and lack of correction, it afforded certain freedoms and privileges with which it would be unpleasant to part.

Mr. Thomas Mifflin, who had received one of the special communications from Boston, represented a whole combination of clashing interests. A Quaker, a merchant of great fortune—in

herited—a dweller in one of the stateliest houses of Philadelphia, he had every reason to stand on the cautious and conservative side. But Thomas Mifflin, in his handsome, florid person, with his bold and completely honest spirit, was not the appropriate character for the part of caution. He was rash, impetuous, chaotic in his thinking and his methods, a friend of bold movements. He was beginning to show signs, to the horror of the fellow members of his Meeting, that he favored resistance to English encroachments even by force of arms. Associated with him in all liberal ideas was the young lawyer, Joseph Reed, a delightful, friendly man who had recently moved from New Jersey to settle in Philadelphia.

No person receiving those letters, hearing them read, or joining in the acceptance of that message asking for “a joint resolution,” did so except at the cost of altering the course of his whole life. But to no one was the result a more complete and overwhelming change than to Charles Thomson, now breaking the seals of his missive from Boston. He was a widower of forty-five, a classical scholar, master of a small but prosperous business, about to be married to a well-to-do woman of important connections. It would seem that Charles Thomson, above any other person, was a man well settled in his way of life, with comfortable auguries of an easily discernible future. Moreover, he was of a gay and liberal spirit, already deeply associated with the intricate party contests of the day. His influence was great among the less educated, the less privileged and infinitely more progressive set of political thinkers with whom he had close sympathy. Nor, on account of his shrewd and judicious mind, did he lack friends among those more careful men who had so much to lose that they could not consider any political step without taking that fact into account.

Not a single one of those earlier interests of Charles Thomson was to survive the new career into which he was to find himself drawn. His bride was to sit neglected at home; his business was

to know him no more; his scholarship was to be put aside; even his party sympathies were to be firmly renounced for such a new task as he could never have foreseen for himself. Yet for the moment he was still thinking and acting in his old vein, consulting with his friends Mifflin and Reed as to what immediate steps were to be taken. There was no doubt for a moment in the hearts of any of the three: the plea of Massachusetts must be heeded; her connection with England was identical with that of the other provinces; her danger was actually the danger of thirteen colonies and not one.

They needed no enlargement of the facts by Paul Revere—excellent purveyor of information though he was—for them to picture General Gage riding at the head of his men through the streets of Boston, trumpets, drums, and banners glorifying his new authority, to picture him met with an address of welcome by the sycophantic few, watched with sullen silence by the hostile many. Nor did any person in mercantile Philadelphia need to be told what it meant to a city which lives by sea-borne commerce to have its port suddenly and arbitrarily closed. Ships which were the objects of affection and pride, as well as the sources of revenue, would be rotting useless, their crews discharged or idle and falling into mischief. Fortunes would ebb steadily or, if caught too widely extended, would fall in swift collapse. Little business ventures would be snuffed out in no more than a month or two. Yet the problems of these would be simple beside that of the poor, who would see unemployment growing, would feel at once the pinch of sharp privation with the desperate knowledge that it must grow greater and ever greater. For these three men at least, the habit of a lifetime had altered, and those in one colony were thinking for the first time in deep personal anxiety of the affairs of another. But even in that small room there was to be found every shade of opinion, and already these three could feel their warm zeal reach out and touch the chill edge of others' indifference, caution, and downright fear.

More than one voice had already pronounced the comfortable phrase, "Massachusetts is no concern of ours."

It was plain how difficult it would be to bring divided, conservative, pacific Pennsylvania to offer aid which might lead to trial of arms. This chance gathering of men who had come to hear the news could do nothing official; there must be a more general meeting, where all aspects of the matter could be duly discussed. Otherwise there would be no backing for any policy which might be adopted by the spirited few. Yet there was every reason to believe that, to such a meeting, the careful men and the fearful would come crowding, that there would be dictation by the powerful interests of wealth and Quaker conservatism to hold back aid for Boston. Those interests had little use for Thomas Mifflin and Joseph Reed, although they had a slightly greater esteem for Charles Thomson. These three must find some man more generally approved than they, who would present a proper measure for approval and help of Massachusetts. The need was for some person of justice and warmth of sympathy who could see instantly in what case Boston stood, and who was, moreover, in good repute with high and low. Those consulting did not hesitate a moment before coming to a conclusion. Undoubtedly the man was John Dickinson, author of the much-read political papers, *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania*, known and esteemed throughout Pennsylvania for his fairness and careful judgment. But could he be persuaded to fill the appointed part?

The company dispersed, each interested person undertaking to perform his share in the necessary preparations. Some would arrange for the announcement of the public meeting to be held the next evening at the City Tavern, where there was room for a gathering of several hundred people. Some were to assemble names for a possible committee who were to write the reply to be sent back to Boston. Upon the three who had set the enterprise on foot devolved the duty of getting the consent of John

Dickinson to appear and speak his mind. Paul Revere, bringer of the tidings which had aroused such turmoil, retired to his justly earned rest, but those to whom he had carried the letters, in particular Charles Thomson, were awake and occupied for the whole night.

The affair of the meeting had been successfully settled, but the more difficult question was still undecided by midmorning next day when three very anxious men set out in a carriage to dine, by invitation, with John Dickinson at his country place, Fairhill, and talk the matter over. Two of the friends were in grave doubt, but Charles Thomson was cheerful; he thought the matter could be arranged. He had long been Dickinson's close friend, had been associated with him in various matters, and he was, further, on the point of marrying the cousin of John Dickinson's wife.

Earlier in the history of the difficulties over the tax on tea, Dickinson had been ready and eager to take a public stand, but Thomson had advised his holding himself a little in reserve. His special talents and his position, Thomson said, would be more fully needed later. Philadelphia had succeeded in turning back the tea ships without their being unloaded, a matter in which Mifflin and Thomson had taken no small part. John Penn, governor of the province, had looked the other way in the affair of the tea ships and had received a reprimand therefor from the Earl of Dartmouth, Secretary of State for the colonies. A more obstinate and less wise governor of Massachusetts, whose sons happened to be interested merchants, had insisted on a different policy, had precipitated the crisis which broke open the East India Company's laden chests and sent various worthy gentlemen of Boston home to their wives that December morning, looking innocent but with their shoes full of tea.

There was talk going about Philadelphia now, among the careful and the well-to-do, that the wisdom of turning back the tea ships had been very doubtful, an error proposed by firebrands.

Nothing could be more certain than that they would listen to no more proposals from the same quarter. This, then, was the moment for which John Dickinson had been holding himself in reserve, still in full possession of general public confidence. He had well earned that confidence through his quiet kindness, his firm integrity, his clear and judicial mind. He was known to be a little given to hesitation in the face of insistent crisis, but that, to his conservative friends, was no fault at all. Talk of the letters from Boston had run throughout Philadelphia in the night; the comment in the most influential circles had not been very encouraging. Charles Thomson was sure that this was Dickinson's great opportunity to come forward. But would John Dickinson be sure also? Talk of the immediate future could scarcely have been very cheerful or abundant as the friends took their way through the edges of the city into the countryside where, in the Pennsylvania climate, late May marks the turning of spring into full summer.

The fields on the smooth slopes of the Pennsylvania hills are always velvety after the spring plowing, and now the prick of new green was showing through the dark richness of the soil, the apple trees showed the new-set fruit in green buttons, and the hedgerows were thick and leafy. Fairhill stood on high ground, a low, solid house with a recessed entranceway, set in broad gardens said to be the finest in the colony. The interior, when the three came in, was quiet and cool, not white-paneled like other great houses, but with walls of red cedar and oak, waxed to the highest point of brilliance under the perfect housekeeping of Mary Dickinson.

The master of the house came to greet them, a handsome man, slim, frail-looking, with a narrow, intelligent face and a look of carefulness, gentleness—sometimes, as at this moment—of indecision. His wife and his mother, Mary Cadwalader Dickinson, made their curtsies and withdrew. Talk turned at once to the letters from Boston, the proposed meeting, the necessity of supporting Massachusetts. Dickinson was interested, but cool and

restrained. When he was asked squarely whether he would attend the meeting and speak at it, he was most reluctant. He had sympathy with Boston, assuredly, but suppose support of the colony would have to be "carried to extremity?" There ought to be time for deliberation in such a serious matter, but there was no time now.

But for the very sake of moderation, the others urged. He was known to be a wise and cautious man; Philadelphia would embrace whatever resolution he would advocate. Suppose these three, who had a name for overboldness, should make their propositions; then suppose, in the face of rising disapproval among the cool minds, Dickinson should come forward with a plan that would go only half as far. It would be sufficient, really, for him to ask for a request to the Governor to call together the Provincial Assembly. There, in due and proper debate, the position to be taken by Pennsylvania could be officially settled. Such a request to the Governor would undoubtedly be supported by the meeting at the City Tavern and would be the first step toward real assistance from the whole province. The strategy was Charles Thomson's. At last John Dickinson, unhappily aware that some important step would most certainly be taken at such a meeting, gave his tentative consent.

They went out to dinner and, since there was other company present, the burning subject had to be dropped. But afterward, on the broad hints of the committee from Philadelphia, the other gentlemen retired. So also did the two ladies, the latter uneasily, knowing that their Johnny was being urged to something of which their Quaker principles would not approve. But, unfortunately, Dickinson had now had time to reconsider. Dinner in that society was at three in the afternoon; hours had been spent over it and now there was barely time to get back to the city in time for the meeting. And John Dickinson was declaring that he would not go. In desperation, Charles Thomson directed that the others go on. "I will not come without him," he assured them.



Joseph Reed was convinced that if the ladies, waiting in greater and greater disquiet in the parlor, should once get access to Dickinson, every hope of his assistance would be lost. But Thomson promised desperately that all would yet be carried out as they hoped, and the other two set out.

The meeting at the City Tavern, on Second Street, above Walnut, was packed. The Long Room would hold three hundred people and there was not room for one more. As was expected, the Quakers were present in force; nothing was to be done without their knowledge and restraint. While the company waited for the meeting to begin, the buzz of talk grew louder and louder, confused, hot, and partisan. Parliament—taxes—Boston—tea. A congress is the answer—no colony can act alone in supporting Boston—only delegates from all the colonies can settle on a plan.

In spite of so much talk of a congress, it had always been vague, but here at last was the event and the necessity to formulate all those nebulous ideas. A congress could take measures for united action, vigorous measures to which, in the end, all would have to subscribe—so thought the hotheads. A congress could insure caution and reason, could find means for friendly settlement—so declared the cooler minds. The idea of a general gathering for all the colonies was coming closer and closer to realization. Vociferous and impatient demands were being made on Joseph Reed to open the meeting. He was waiting, he told them, "for an important addition to their counsels." He begged their patience a little longer. He was desperate. Dickinson and Thomson had not come, Mifflin's ardor had cooled and he was expressing doubts as to any successful outcome of such a gathering. The room grew hotter and hotter, both in spirit and in actuality. At last the door opened and Thomson came in, haggard but triumphant, for he had brought John Dickinson.

Reed opened the meeting, reviewing the messages which had come from Boston and dwelling on their vast significance. That Boston was to be supported by the most vigorous, most daring

measures, was the burden of his speech, bold propositions which he expected Thomson to back up, since his turn at speaking came next. But Thomson, after a sleepless night, after the exertions and anxieties of the day, with the heat of the room and the tension of the moment, had undergone more than mortal man could hope to endure. He had scarcely got beyond his challenge: "We must make common cause with Boston," when he fainted and was carried into another room, leaving Reed to hold the assembly together until Dickinson was ready to speak. The tumult was deafening; all voices shouted suggestions and protests at once. Then John Dickinson rose and his authority achieved sudden quiet. His words were few—he expressed deep sympathy for the trials of Boston and their sister colony of Massachusetts; he urged that the meeting pass an address to the Governor to call together the Provincial Assembly for the purpose of considering "the grave state of public affairs." He seconded that part of Reed's speech that proposed that the Assembly be asked to take measures to "show our inclination to take every legal step that we may obtain redress for our grievances." Alexander Wilcocks and Provost Smith of the College of Philadelphia spoke in opposition, but a great tumult of voices swept the resolution through, since it was moderate enough to satisfy the majority. A committee was chosen, combined of even numbers of the cool and the hotheads, to draft a reply to the letter from Boston. John Dickinson was made chairman and Provost Smith one of the members. The meeting broke up, everyone was hoarse and weary, no one was actually satisfied. But action had been taken, a ripple of action, which was a true beginning of the great wave which was to follow.

The committee met next day and composed the letter to Boston, mostly the work of Provost Smith. It expressed the deepest sympathy for the cruel position of the City of Boston, but it declared "what further advice to offer on this sad occasion is a matter of the greatest difficulty to determine." The sense of the

city, of the Province of Pennsylvania, of the neighboring colonies, must be explored first. There was a tactful but definite hint that it was possible that paying for the East India Company's tea might be, at the moment, the best way to settle immediate difficulties. As for a method of obtaining redress for the grievances under which all the colonies labored, that must also be well considered. It would have to be decided by due deliberation whether the method should be a nonimportation agreement, as suggested, or whether the real means should be to call for a congress of deputies from all the colonies. Such a gathering could state their rights to His Majesty in firm, decent, and dutiful terms. The writers of the letter felt that the latter measure would be the most agreeable to their province, that the former step of nonimportation should be reserved as a last resource. They would take measures at once to find out the opinion prevailing in the other colonies. A copy of their letter was to be laid before the Committee of Correspondence of New York, where the messenger was to stop for that colony's answer. The next day was Sunday, but in spite of the day Paul Revere was on the road again with Pennsylvania's reply.

The New York Committee of Correspondence read the Pennsylvania letter and framed their own in much the same terms. They too expressed sympathy, and lamented "their inability to relieve your anxiety by a decisive opinion." They were more definite in declaring "upon these reasons we conclude that a Congress of Deputies of the colonies in general is of the utmost moment and that it ought to be assembled without delay." Paul Revere was riding north with his two replies on May twenty-third. By that day the committee elected at the City Tavern had already overcome the hesitations of Provost Smith and was carrying its proposals further. They wrote to Boston on May twenty-fourth in regard to various methods of withholding goods from England and the probable results on English trade. They concluded with the first definite statement which had yet appeared.

"We shall try to convene the Congress of all the colonies as soon as may be." They at once dispatched messengers southward, as they had been requested, to acquaint the other colonies with what had happened and with what Pennsylvania had advised.

In Williamsburg, Virginia, the House of Burgesses was debating the matter by the twenty-ninth of May and incurred the wrath of Governor Dunmore by commenting on "the hostile invasion of the City of Boston," and by proposing a day of fasting and prayer to mark the date when the Boston Port Bill was to go into effect. The Governor's reply was brief and famous.

I have in my hand a paper published by order of your House, conceived in such terms as to reflect highly upon His Majesty and the Parliament of Great Britain which makes it necessary to dissolve you and you are dissolved accordingly.

His Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, as they continued to term themselves, were therefore obliged to issue their agreement concerning a general congress from the Apollo Room of the Raleigh Tavern, whither they had adjourned after the Governor's dissolution of their body. As for the proposal of nonimportation, they stated that "a tender regard for the interest of our fellow subjects, the merchants and manufacturers of Great Britain, prevents us from going further at this time," although they concluded that if nonimportation was the only means of winning redress for wrongs, they would embrace it.

South Carolina received the messages from Boston and Philadelphia by the ship *Sea Nymph* on May thirty-first. Her Committee of Correspondence immediately began calling up the local committees for a general meeting of consultation. By July sixth the plan had become so definite everywhere that colony after colony was appointing delegates to repair to Philadelphia to meet there on the first Monday in September. Georgia received the word last, but general sentiment and her Assembly were so loyal to the King that she could send no official answer. Of all those to

whom Boston had written and offered her proposal for non-importation, the most prompt reply had come from Rhode Island, where Paul Revere had stopped first. The answer was completely unofficial, being only from the town meeting of Providence, Samuel Nightingale, moderator. But the resolutions, passed on May seventeenth, three days after the landing of Gage and his troops, declared that "this town will heartily join with the Province of Massachusetts Bay . . . in such measures as shall be generally agreed on by the colonies, and desires that further the deputies of this town be requested to use their influence at the approaching session of the General Assembly for promoting a Congress as soon as may be."

Thus a great possibility was fast turning into a great reality.

John Dickinson had gone home early and alone from the meeting at the City Tavern. His proposal for a request to the Governor to call together the Assembly seemed an innocuous enough move, but this was a moment when any move at all would set great matters in motion. Governor Penn was almost certain to refuse the request, but that would not be the end. It was conceivable that the Assembly might meet without his order, as it had the legal right to do if summoned by its speaker, Joseph Galloway. And even if Galloway refused to call them, it was quite possible that the people would convene in a meeting of their own. Boston's request for aid, the suggestion of united measures against England, could never be put aside without hot struggle and debate, debate which might lead—anywhere. A congress was probably the answer; it might be the means of coming to terms with the ill-advised British ministry who were so dangerously leading the King astray. John Dickinson had controlled the meeting, for he was an able and forcible public speaker, but who would be able to control a congress of unknown persons, of clashing interests and belligerent personalities? There was no telling where it all would end, no measure for what tremendous events might follow. No one is ever really ready for tremendous events;

John Dickinson was no more so than any other. It was hard for him to turn his mind to the realization of these great matters, but he must, since all the men he knew were thinking of them tonight. The carriage moved through the silent countryside until the bright windows of Fairhill showed where lights were burning to see the master home. The very house was an irresistible reminder of all the secure and pleasant past.

John Dickinson was to represent for all time a certain kind and quality of thinking which had so deep a part in our struggle for liberty as to make it a revolution unlike any other. And behind John Dickinson tonight was Fairhill and all it stood for; behind Fairhill was old Isaac Norris, who had lived there before him, had become his warm friend, and who had left the stamp of his mind on the politics of Pennsylvania and on the spirit of his young admirer and ally, Johnny Dickinson. And behind this Isaac Norris was an older one still, who came empty-handed from Jamaica, where all his family had perished in the great earthquake, who founded a solid fortune and built Fairhill after the pattern of Dolobran, the ancient seat of his wife's family in Wales. He had been the friend of William Penn, and when Penn lay in the debtors' prison in London, it was Norris who obtained his freedom. All these were a part of John Dickinson as he, in turn, was to become a part of the American Revolution.

It was the younger Isaac Norris, an old man as Dickinson knew him, who had been Speaker of the Provincial Assembly the year that the great bell was ordered from England, and it was by Isaac Norris' choice that the words were engraved round the curve of its great metal shoulder:

Proclaim liberty throughout the land, to all the inhabitants thereof.  
Levit. xxv, 10.

Isaac Norris had no such thing as political progress in view when he chose the text; he was recording the fact that this was the fiftieth year of the Pennsylvania Assembly under the pro-

proprietary government and that, by direction of the Bible, the jubilee year was a time for lying fallow, for a year of rest for the land, the vineyards, and their laborers. "And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout the land." No literal application was to be made of the text, but it was an appropriate one for the Biblical-minded province in its jubilee celebration. This second Isaac Norris had stood stubbornly for government by the proprietary family of the Penns, until he resigned the speakership of the Assembly after holding it for thirty-one years. He did not live long thereafter and left his two daughters at Fairhill, orphans and alone in the world, their only real protection their devotion to each other. The elder, Mary Norris, thin, handsome, black-haired, was so absorbed in her younger sister Sarah that she had apparently no realization of the regard that her father's young lawyer friend so evidently felt for her. But when Sarah died of smallpox, Mary Norris, indomitable to that moment, knew suddenly that she was a woman and a woman alone, and turned for comfort to the love of John Dickinson. She was able as was her father, politically minded like him, like him a staunch Quaker and an unbending spirit, a woman of strong, even wild, emotions. To all this John Dickinson was coming home through the May dark on that night of great and unspoken possibilities.

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## CHAPTER III

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### *The Gathering*

ALTHOUGH Philadelphia was the most populous and thriving city in the thirteen colonies, the strain upon her resources was soon to be great. Nearly sixty gentlemen, most of them of "the first fortune," were expected to arrive for an indefinite stay, and the problem as to where to put them, where to find suitable accommodation for their servants and stabling for their horses, was no easy one to solve. A very few were bringing their wives, although the journeys were, for the most part, so long and arduous and the cares at home so many that most of the ladies had chosen to remain behind. It was their part to administer households and plantations and to watch over the children while the head of the family was away on the service of his country. Those gentlemen who had been used to soft and comfortable and spacious living would have to be content with narrower quarters in the crowded city, would have to put up with some discomforts in the hot, late-summer weather. But Philadelphia was preparing to do its best, feeling the responsibility to the full. Every house that could take a lodger, every room that could be enlisted for special service, was being made ready. The taverns were being refurbished and painted, floors were scrubbed with sand, and small-paned windows were polished to a new brightness.

Dwelling places might be limited, but of good cheer there was to be no stint. Hospitable entertainment would play a great and useful part in the coming transactions, as any thoughtful person would know at once. Even the market women seemed to be aware of it as they fattened ducks and put down eggs. The mistresses



of the great houses—the country places like Fairhill, Mount Pleasant, the Woodlands, and Cliveden—of the city mansions like the Mifflin and the Shippen dwellings, were anxiously going over stores of linen and getting out the great silver tankards and punch bowls. The master of every such household had taken careful stock of his wine. Leaves were beginning to turn yellow and lie in the gutters; the dust of the long, hot summer blew through the streets, but the white steps and window sills were immaculate, the brass door handles and hinges and knockers flashed in the sun. Philadelphia was ready.

As was expected, Governor Penn had declined the request to call the Assembly. He wrote to his superior in London, the Earl of Dartmouth, "Should so affrontive an application be really made to me, Your Lordship may be assured that I will treat it as it deserves."

But later he found himself moved to change his mind and was pushed into using the slender excuse of Indian troubles for a reason. He became aware, after a huge public meeting in the State House yard, that, if he refused to give way, matters would go entirely out of official hands. That mass meeting passed resolutions of sympathy and support for Massachusetts, opened subscription lists for relief of the people of Boston, affirmed the appointment of the committee chosen at the City Tavern, and added to it. Certain members, it was agreed, were to make a tour of the countryside to discover the tenor of public opinion. "Under the color of an excursion of pleasure," as Charles Thomson recorded, "Dickinson, Mifflin, and Thomson made a tour through two or three of the frontier counties in order to discover the sentiments of the inhabitants."

John Dickinson's wife was with him, to increase the appearance of an innocent pleasure jaunt, and she had brought her cousin, Hannah Harrison. It was the full tide of summer, with green fields and pasturage deep and fresh. They stopped at cross-roads to talk to farmers, they attended barbecues, they dined at

taverns on the good fare of the abundant country, they spent long evenings with the soft night air coming in through the vine-hung and latticed windows of the country inns. John Dickinson and his Polly were anxious and deeply concerned as to what was to come, but two of that party were very happy.

Governor Penn, obliged to accept the necessity of a meeting of the Assembly, could do nothing but stand quiescent while representatives were being appointed for the Congress. But in the end he had cause for relief and satisfaction, since Joseph Galloway, Speaker of the Assembly and a man after the Royal Governor's own heart, was head of the Pennsylvania delegation and had even stipulated that he would not serve unless he were privileged to draw up the instructions to the delegates. It was Joseph Galloway's usual procedure to refuse to act unless he could dictate all the conditions and circumstances himself. His abilities and his powers of persuasion were so great that he was many times successful in just such stipulations, and got his own way, to his own undoing. There was, as a result of his control, nothing dangerous or liberal about the program which the Pennsylvania delegates were ordered to follow. Galloway's political bias was revealed by his published opinion of John Dickinson's *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania*, of which he said, "Such factious pieces would answer for the selectmen of Boston and the mob meetings of Rhode Island," but he was sure "they would be despised here, Pennsylvania being of a different make, of more sobriety, none of your damned republican breed."

Earlier in his political career Galloway had been the able lieutenant of that skillful politician, Benjamin Franklin, in the long campaign against the continuance of proprietary government in Pennsylvania. After Franklin's departure for England, his political interests were left in the hands of Galloway, whom Dr. Franklin saw as a young politician of brilliant ability and great promise. Moreover, the young man was the age of his own son, William Franklin, and the younger Franklin's great friend. Benjamin

Franklin, on one or two occasions in his life, misjudged character and placed confidence where it was not deserved. It was one of the most bitter sorrows of his later days that he found himself so disappointed in both these able, agreeable young men who seemed so well set each upon his own successful career: William Franklin as Governor of New Jersey by royal appointment, and Galloway as Speaker of the Assembly and one of the most affluent landowners in the neighborhood of Philadelphia.

Both of them, for a time, seemed to be carrying out all the elder man's happy predictions. But prosperity agreed ill with their particular natures; the very characteristics which these two had in common and which made them such friends—ambition, vanity, and a desire for secure and prosperous well-being—were of the sort to overwhelm, little by little, all their better parts. The mistake which Benjamin Franklin had made concerning his young colleague was repeated by others, as Galloway came before the larger public of the Congress; his able eloquence, his careful, legalistic logic, his zeal to find a good conclusion of their deliberations, all brought him into favor at once. But as his new allies saw him in action, as they observed his stand in the matter of one grave problem after another, there was a gradual change. It came slowly, however, and was very near to being disastrously late.

Galloway had not only succeeded in getting exactly the men he wanted into the group of representatives of Pennsylvania, he had done even better than that—he had kept out his two most dangerous opponents, for neither John Dickinson nor Charles Thomson was appointed by the Assembly to a place in the Congress. Dickinson, as a defender of proprietary government with Isaac Norris, had many times crossed swords politically with Galloway. In a hotter and younger period he had even challenged Galloway to a duel which the other refused to have any part in, giving opportunity for even harder words and more bitter differences between them than before. In spite of all Galloway's opposition to proprietary government, in spite of his

having appeared as counsel in the lawsuits attacking the great landholdings of the Penn family, he was still so confirmed and open an adherent of the British Throne and so unshakable in his loyalty to the King's person, that he was no source of anxiety to the Governor. So great was his influence in the Assembly that the members had no thought of selecting any delegates who were not of his choosing. They were all, therefore, well on the side of reconciliation, with the exception only of Thomas Mifflin, whom he had not found important enough to condemn. The members from Pennsylvania were to continue to be of that character, including later even the Governor's own brother-in-law, Andrew Allen. With Galloway now were a Biddle, a Rhoads of the strict Quaker party, and George Ross of Lancaster who, early in the Congress, offered the proposal that Massachusetts be left to her own discretion with respect to government and justice as well as defense.

In comparison with these, John Dickinson's careful conservatism was of a very different color. As for Charles Thomson, he was one who had dealings with the "damned breed of republicans," and Galloway had used every political device to keep him from being appointed to the Congress. As the day for the opening approached, Galloway had reason to be well satisfied with all his measures; he had, as often before, got his own way. Was there any reason to suppose that he would not continue to do so, that he would not go forward with equal success in the larger field, among greater and greater men? Only Joseph Galloway himself knew how far his ambition had stretched and what a dazzling place he had envisioned for himself in the future.

All roads were leading to Philadelphia in the fair, early-autumn weather. Delegates had been chosen in every colony and by various methods. It had been the general idea that they should be selected by the different colonial legislative bodies and chosen from among their own number. The second stipulation was more or less fulfilled, but the first was in many cases impossible. Vari-

ous colonial assemblies were too much under the influence, and often only too closely under the eye, of the royal governor. He could refuse to convene them, as had John Penn, or could dissolve them when their strictures on the British government became too impertinent, as did Lord Dunmore. In Massachusetts the summons to dissolve was presented to a blank, locked door, behind which the General Court was meeting. The emissary from the Governor stood fuming on the stairs while, within, Samuel Adams presided over the meeting which appointed him, John Adams, Thomas Cushing, and Robert Treat Paine deputies to Philadelphia.

In the Colony of New York the royalist party and the Deputy Governor, Cadwallader Colden, were so powerful that there was not even a building where a representative group could gather to consider resolutions concerning the holding of a congress. The meeting in the fields passed resolves approving the plan for a general congress and calling for a convention to choose deputies. John Jay, James Duane, Philip Livingston, Isaac Low, and John Alsop were selected, but it was clear these represented only the region of the City of New York and not the whole colony. It was agreed finally that each county should be asked to hold a meeting and select a representative of its own. Colden declared with satisfaction to Lord Dartmouth that most of the counties did not accept the invitation to hold a meeting, but he was wrong. A fair number did so; no matter how few were the friends of liberty who came together, orderly elections were carried out. In one case only two men presented themselves, but was not two a meeting? They voted unanimously for one of them, and Simon Boerum arrived as a delegate from King's County. Thus, under the stress of the time and necessity, the ancient procedure of direct democracy was invoked, and conventions gathered which really stood for the whole of a colony, as the Congress came to stand so truly for the whole of the thirteen. In many cases the legal Assemblies managed, in defiance of the governor

or with his unwilling connivance, to confirm the appointments, so that, as the Congress gathered, it was, so far as American opinion was concerned, a legal body. There were, of course, no articles in any colonial charter which gave permission for a congress. Nor were there any which forbade one. Cadwallader Colden sat down with a sigh to write to his chief in London :

"These transactions are dangerous, my Lord, and illegal, but by what means shall government prevent them?" He was able to give thanks at least that Alexander McDougall, "the Wilkes of New York," was not appointed. John Jay and James Duane were eminent lawyers, and Low, Livingston, and Alsop were respectable, even distinguished, men of business. Colden believed that it could well have been worse.

By dusty travel on horseback, up the roads of Virginia and Maryland, were riding in company Colonel George Washington, Mr. Edmund Pendleton, and Mr. Patrick Henry, part of the delegation from Virginia. Others were coming from the same colony: Colonel Richard Henry Lee, Mr. Richard Bland, Mr. Benjamin Harrison, and Mr. Peyton Randolph, Speaker of the House of Burgesses. They did not all travel together, for Virginia had its rifts and rivalries even as did Pennsylvania. There were Lees everywhere in Virginia politics, respected Lees, beloved Lees, tolerated Lees. Richard Henry was, politically speaking, hardly even one of the last. In a certain deeply bitter controversy, recently over, the guardianship of some public funds had come into question and he had insistently called for an investigation, demanding it in the House of Burgesses and in the very presence of the man he condemned. Inquiry had brought ugly matters to light and called down scandal upon some of the highest names in Virginia. No matter how honest a man he was, so it was thought by many, Colonel Lee should have had more decent respect for the proprieties and for the private honor of certain important gentlemen. This was the general verdict, so that what he had done was hard to forget, nor was it forgotten. The pen-

manship and the style of the Declaration of Independence itself would have been different had it not been for that old controversy. Mr. Edmund Pendleton was a tall man, of great dignity, one of the most able persons in Virginia's political history and one of the most conservative. Yet the conservatism of Virginia was not that of Pennsylvania, or of New England. Richard Bland was small, with a dry, wrinkled old face, and possessed, so it was said, of great learning both in the law and in the history of the past. Benjamin Harrison moved heavily in all he did, a ponderous gentleman of broad girth and broad jokes, carrying weightily the responsibility of an old and distinguished name.

The delegates from South Carolina came by sea. They were a closely knit alliance by opinion and family connection—with one more. John and Edward Rutledge were brothers, the first a steady-minded, fair man of much political insight; the younger a hot, voluble, impetuous youth, easily aroused and easily offended, yet with a certain warmth of admiration where he saw ability in others. Henry Middleton—whose daughter was married to the younger Rutledge—was with them, later to be joined by his son Arthur, brother-in-law of Edward Rutledge. The two Thomas Lynches, Sr. and Jr., came together. It was the father who had the seat in the Congress, but he was to be succeeded by his son. All of them were of the aristocratic tradition, delicately reared, highly educated, some of them as familiar with the ways and manners of London as with their own Charleston. With them came Christopher Gadsden, a man not of their kind at all. He had been purser on board a British vessel, he was of close sympathy with the ordinary people, he had a personality not only uncongenial, but definitely repugnant to the taste of his colleagues.

Down in far-off and thinly settled Georgia they were still arguing. The voices of the patriots were slender and were crying in the wilderness. The rest of the colony clung to its trade, its newly established prosperity, and its own idea of what a king was. They were to change their minds soon, but they had not come far yet.

Philadelphia, buzzing with excitement as the travelers came nearer and nearer, began to be filled with vague reports. It was quite certain that the most distinguished men in the country were soon to be housed in the city, representing the largest fortunes, the highest reputations at the bar and in political life. The aristocracy of Maryland, the Carolinas, and Virginia were bearing down upon the place, the able men of Delaware and New Jersey, the renowned lawyers of New York, and more than one member of that great and powerful New York clan, the Livingstons. And now who was it, again, who was coming from New England? Rumors were prolific indeed about these unknown members of the deputations, but if the reports were traced to their source, many of them might have been seen to go back to Joseph Gallo-way and his particular circle.

It had been said at first that John Hancock was coming, the great fortune of Massachusetts. But friends had persuaded him not to risk his health, which was deficient—nor his riches—in such an undertaking, and he had declined election. Thomas Cushing was coming, a lawyer of Boston. Samuel Adams was coming, a political agitator, desperately poor, a man of no great weight who lived by popularity and needed the notoriety of a position in the Congress to support his prestige. His cousin, John Adams, was coming, a young and needy lawyer, someone of no significance. Robert Treat Paine was coming, again a lawyer, of whom no one had heard very much. That was the company, so Philadelphia was hearing. Of the New Hampshire delegation and those from Connecticut and Rhode Island, not very much more was known. New England was, after all, a region very far away.

Meanwhile, quite unconscious of these unflattering accounts which were current concerning them in Philadelphia, the four delegates from Massachusetts were traveling southward in a coach together. They went by easy stages, hailed with enthusiasm and good will all through southern Massachusetts and in northern Connecticut. They were met outside the towns by cheering friends



of liberty, invited to dinner at the taverns, and accompanied on their way as they went forward again. At Hartford they were joined by one of the Connecticut delegates, Silas Deane, a somewhat showy man, who had married a wealthy widow and had forsaken the law for trade. He was one of the sort who knows everyone and could give abundant information to the more provincial travelers from Massachusetts. Roger Sherman came to see them in New Haven, a solid, sensible sort of man, John Adams thought him to be, a trifle harsh and abrupt in his talk, but full of honesty and truth. A grand procession came out to meet them as they neared New Haven, bells rang, cannon boomed, and women and children ran to the windows to watch them pass. John Adams took it as a demonstration of sympathy for Massachusetts, lying under the hand of the armed might of Britain, and of a token of intention to support the new Congress. While they were at supper at the inn, however, the host, Isaac Bear, growing confidential, told them that earlier in the day the populace had been unduly excited, were on the brink of erecting a liberty pole and of possibly going on to unlawful excesses of mob violence. It was the opportune thought of Judge Ingersoll to draw them off and expend their energies in a procession of greeting to the members of the Congress. The travelers all rested there a day, for the journey had been hard and Silas Deane was ill. It was on Saturday morning, the twentieth of August, that they rolled into the City of New York and stopped at the sign of the Bunch of Grapes.

Six days they spent in New York, the recipients of much pleasant entertainment and of a great deal of instruction and advice. John Adams managed to find the opportunity to explore some of the city alone and on foot. He found that he liked the broad, straight streets, and was particularly pleased with the wide view from the Battery and with the ellipse of grass where stood the gilded statue of King George III on horseback. He saw an East Indiaman building in the shipyards; eight hundred tons was a

great size for a ship. Mr. Morin Scott, to whose house in the country Alexander McDougall took him for breakfast, told him even more than had Silas Deane about the New York delegates. Isaac Low "would profess attachment to the cause of liberty, but his sincerity is doubted," was Scott's opinion. "Mr. Jay was only twenty-six, a hard student at the law and a good speaker; Mr. Alsop a merchant of good heart, but unequal to this trust in point of abilities." Slightly to his dismay Adams heard that all these gentlemen were Episcopalians except Livingston; he seems not to have been prepared for just that. Philip Livingston he met later, "a great, rough, rapid mortal" with whom it was impossible to converse because his talk was so overwhelming. Adams was told by McDougall that there was virtue and ability as well as fortune in the Livingstons. Their clan was to the Colony of New York what the Lees were to Virginia. James Duane came to pay his respects; Adams thought he had "a sly, surveying eye." The two seemed to realize at a glance that they were to be antagonists. John Jay he did not meet, although his name came up in conversation more than that of any other.

It was a gay, wearing, and distracting time, made up of pleasant moments and those which were otherwise. At one point the communicative McDougall took John Adams aside and cautioned him against saying anything in public company about the possibility of ultimate hostilities with England. There was a strong party which greatly feared civil war, Adams was told, and it behooved him to be very careful. John Adams, thinking of the files of scarlet-coated soldiers parading through the streets of Boston, taking possession of the public places and quartering themselves on the householders, felt that the subject of armed force could scarcely be ignored, but agreed to maintain a discreet silence.

They set out once more, toward the end of the week, paused briefly at Princeton where they met a surprising number of those whom they were to see and hear of again, and heard President

Witherspoon read prayers. That strong friend of American liberty had not so long ago arrived from Scotland to take the office of the head of the College of New Jersey, persuaded to the undertaking by Richard Stockton, the Chief Justice of the colony. Over a dish of coffee, President Witherspoon told them of his own political interests and activities, and what he had been able to accomplish along with Mr. William Livingston, another of that great family, who had moved into New Jersey. The travelers moved on to Trent Town and ferried over the Delaware, broad, slow, and beautiful, running low between its soft green banks at the end of the hot summer. It was a sight new to men who conceived of a river as a plunging and abundant mountain stream. They were almost at their journey's end now. Five miles out of Philadelphia a company of gentlemen came to meet them at Frankford.

They were dusty and tired, these wayfarers who had come so far. It was good to be met, to be made much of, to sit down to tea with the new acquaintances while they took stock of one another. This was Dr. Rush, very young, but one of the coming physicians of Philadelphia, not a member of the Congress but eager in the cause. Here was the handsome, impressive Thomas Mifflin, richly dressed for a Quaker and with a more militant air than Quakers often had. This was Mr. Bayard from Philadelphia; this was—names drifted off in confusion in the tired ears of the Bostonians. Here was the tea.

Would the men from New England mind receiving a few words of advice before the great undertaking began, advice offered in the most friendly way? Yes, indeed, the newcomers agreed they would be most grateful for it.

The reception committee from Philadelphia felt the need of speaking plainly. Friends of the King's government in Massachusetts had been corresponding with their own kind in Pennsylvania and had sent word ahead of just what sort of men these delegates were. The unflattering picture of four needy adven-

turers, moving on Philadelphia and the Congress for their own purposes, was set forth in unsparing detail. It was, of course, the gossip of unpatriotic persons, but the impression had been spread far and wide. Moreover—and this was more serious—these men from New England were suspected of desiring independence. That was a possibility that was not to be breathed in Philadelphia; neither Pennsylvania nor Virginia nor the Carolinas wanted it. “You must not utter the word independence, or give the least hint or insinuation of the idea. No man dares to speak of it here.”

They could all have answered that independence had already been spoken of openly in the Houses of Parliament, as an inevitable result of the ministry’s present policy. But they did not; they waited for more, for there was more to come.

They had journeyed to Philadelphia, so they were told, as the representatives of a suffering and invaded and occupied country. Everyone knew that they had been persecuted, been hurt, been outraged. It was natural that their passions should be excited, but as a result—“You are thought to be too warm, too zealous, too sanguine. You must therefore be very cautious, you must not come forward with any bold measures.” Above all things they must make no move to take the lead. Virginia was the most populous colony, an ancient dominion with great dignity and pride. The southern and middle colonies were all prepared to yield leadership to her; it was hoped that New England would see the light and do likewise.

So they must not speak of independence, and they must suffer Virginia to have full leadership! Two of those men, called by an irate Massachusetts governor, “the brace of Adamses,” could not have helped registering an inward opinion that it mattered little whose was the leadership, provided only that the end was achieved. And what other end could there be than that which both of them cherished in their hearts? But they did not speak aloud. It was expedient advice, they admitted, good sense and good politics, they agreed. Their conduct would be guided in

accordance. They were glad these new friends had spoken so frankly. Now it was time to get on to Philadelphia.

The rest of the arrival was hardly to be recollected clearly. The City Tavern, lights, innumerable faces: Thomas McKean, the member from the lower counties of the Delaware, a thin countenance with a great hawk nose; Edward Rutledge, gay and flushed with the City Tavern's good wine. White wigs, powdered hair, jeweled buttons, and sober coats. A supper spread, more and more people, the clatter of voices, all speaking of great things—weariness, confusion. How many faces and tongues and hearts and spirits went into making up a congress.

During the days which followed, through the waiting for a few more delegates to arrive, the buzz of talk in the streets, in the taverns, and around the dinner tables was all of this matter of leadership. It was generally agreed, as John Adams ruefully admitted, that, politically speaking, Virginia was the obvious colony to stand in the forefront. Actually it was a wise choice, for though Virginia's delegates were not entirely united, and some were definitely more conservative and some more liberal than others, they were all of them more forward-looking, as a body, than many of the other groups of representatives. But no one Virginian except the esteemed and dignified Peyton Randolph, Speaker of the House of Burgesses, seemed to stand out beyond any of the other delegates. John Jay, the brilliant young lawyer from New York, was already well known in certain circles, as were the very important Livingstons. Certainly more people had heard of John Dickinson than of any other American, but he, thanks to the efforts of Galloway, was not a member of the Congress; moreover, he had not, apparently, yet settled on his exact policy in the face of the confusion of events. While speculations went round as to who would emerge as the most important personage, no one noticed very much the short, squarish gentleman with high-colored, full cheeks and a nose slightly drooping at the tip; a pleasant man, an interesting talker when once one

had engaged him in conversation—Mr. John Adams of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. People had heard much more of his cousin, Samuel Adams, a much older and well-tried politician, recognized as being skilled in manipulating factions and playing one political group against another. Although his chosen party was that of the most ordinary level of the people, it was said that this Samuel Adams had won over Mr. Hancock to the cause of resistance to England and had thus enlisted the most prominent man and the greatest fortune in Massachusetts. It was a pity, people said, that Mr. Hancock had not been able to stand for Massachusetts, whose sufferings had brought about the present gathering. It seemed odd that she should be represented by these persons of whom the colonial world had heard so little. Philadelphia was already brimming full when the men from Boston arrived, but they had at last found very unpretentious lodgings at Miss Jane Port's, on Arch Street, halfway between Second and Front, no place for any display of entertaining or for the gathering of influential persons.

There was one among all that company who had his own completed ideas as to whose ambitions and whose final suggestions were to be the policy of the Congress. As one group arrived and then another, Joseph Galloway still failed to find anyone whose strength and influence seemed designed to rival his own. Among those who discussed, approved, and finally attended the projected meeting of all the colonies, there were two conceptions of what the Congress was to accomplish. One group thought of it as a gathering to protest the wrongs inflicted by the ill-advised British government, to establish the actuality and the security of liberty in a new land. The others thought of it as a collection of careful-minded men whose business was to find out some means of compromise in the disputed questions and some satisfactory way of re-establishing good relations with the mother country.

Among these last Galloway was perhaps the man who went farthest in his willingness to sacrifice the grave questions of

human liberties for a peaceable arrangement by which everyone would be reasonably satisfied and life could go on its normal way again. He had already formulated the plan which would accomplish this end and he immediately began forming acquaintances and sounding out newcomers to see how far they could be inclined to his own ideas. He was penetrating enough to see that the colonies which contained an important seaport, like South Carolina and New York, would have the same economic interest in stability of commerce as had Philadelphia. It was for that reason that John Jay and James Duane of New York were approached early, and early began to incline to his orbit, while the Rutledges and the Middletons of South Carolina were only a little further removed from his influence. He was able to flatter himself that he had made a considerable impression on the men from New Hampshire and Rhode Island, who seemed to listen intently to the statement of his views and to be eager to hear more. Galloway was one of the very few who had formulated a definite policy by the day that the Congress opened.

Even until the last minute the place for meeting had not been definitely decided. The Carpenters' Company of Philadelphia had offered their hall with its high, commodious central room and long entry opening off Chestnut Street. But Joseph Galloway had issued an urgent invitation on the part of the Pennsylvania Assembly that the Congress should meet in the State House, in the square, paneled chamber where the legislative body usually sat, but which could adjourn to the banquet hall upstairs for its own meetings. To a mind like his there was every advantage in the fact that there should be close intercourse between the experienced and cautious body of Pennsylvania statesmen and the new and probably far less wise collection of delegates from the other provinces. The matter was to be settled by vote at the first meeting.

On September fifth all the members were to gather at the City Tavern and march through the streets for an inspection of Car-

penters' Hall. They walked together under the eyes of interested Philadelphia, a portentous parade though it passed through only a few squares and boasted no more than forty-three gentlemen. They were a goodly sight, many of them young, all of them dignified, all dressed in their best, were it velvet and lace ruffles or plain gray homespun and unadorned three-cornered hats. The cool interior of Carpenters' Hall welcomed them; here was the roomy entry where, between debates, members could stretch their legs and consult together; here, in a room opposite the great chamber, was the Philadelphia Library Company's collection of books, an excellent adjunct to their deliberations. Why should they seek farther, in spite of the fact or because of it, that Joseph Galloway was so eager to get them into the State House? Already, in this small interval of time, there had grown up a certain small opposition to Joseph Galloway's having his own way. The delegates took their places. Mr. Lynch of South Carolina rose to suggest that, since they were all so well satisfied, there was no reason to consider the matter of a meeting place further. James Duane of New York was on his feet to protest that, in mere compliment to the Speaker of the Pennsylvania Assembly, the invitation to use the State House should be more fully discussed. But the vote for remaining where they were was overwhelming. Joseph Galloway noted the small edge of opposition to his plans, but for the moment he made no resistance.

Mr. Lynch was on his feet again to propose that, since they had in their midst a gentleman "who had presided with great dignity over a very respectable society, to the great advantage of America," they should place the Honorable Peyton Randolph of Virginia in the chair to be President of the Congress, and agreement was unanimous. And now Mr. Lynch, rising for the third time, evidently by preconceived arrangement with friends, declared that the Congress must have a secretary and that he suggested a certain gentleman of family, fortune, and character of Philadelphia—Mr. Charles Thomson. John Jay and Duane both



entered objection, saying that they understood a certain member of the Congress itself—Silas Deane—would be willing to serve, but it was argued that no delegate could really have time to keep the records and act, to any degree, in his character as representative of his colony. Joseph Galloway, who had congratulated himself over the exclusion of Charles Thomson, was obliged to hear him recommended and considered for this important place, to be at the very heart of proceedings and in the full confidence of the Congress.

Charles Thomson was on his honeymoon. The day was Monday and he had been married four days ago. That journey of inquiry among the doubtful counties of Pennsylvania, carried out earlier in the summer, had been, indeed, an expedition of great happiness for him, since he and Hannah Harrison, the handsome woman who was first cousin to Mary Norris Dickinson, were so soon to be married. Now, as bride and bridegroom, they had driven up to Philadelphia to visit Hannah Thomson's aunt, and their carriage was proceeding slowly through the leafy quiet of Chestnut Street. As they drew up and as Thomson got down to hand his new wife from the carriage, a man came hurrying up to speak to him. Mr. Thomson was wanted at Carpenters' Hall. Could he come at once? Leaving the lady and instructing the servant to see that the horses were put up, he went with the messenger without question or delay. The man was the doorkeeper for the Congress; he had been sent to find Mr. Thomson and had been surprisingly lucky in doing so with such dispatch. The big room was quiet as he came in, the impressive quiet of a great occasion. Thomson went up the aisle between the chairs, stopped before the President's table and bowed gravely. What was it the gentlemen wanted of him? He awaited their pleasure.

"The Congress desires the favor of you, sir, to take their minutes," Peyton Randolph told him.

The bridegroom moved to the smaller table which had been set in place for the Secretary. His bride would be sitting in the big

house now, in a high-ceilinged room curtained against the heat, and recounting to her aunt all the things that brides have to tell to their immediate and interested relatives. Charles Thomson was entering at that moment on an even more momentous change in his life and its purposes than marriage would ever bring him. He could not know it, but here was the beginning of a long service, the giving of the best powers of a lifetime. Not until the Revolution was long over, not until the country had transformed itself from a confederation into a constitutional government, not until a new body was ready and the executive power was turned over to the able hands of that same George Washington who now sat so modestly in a corner—not until then was his long task to end. All the shabby secrets, the errors, the despairs of that whole history were to be open to him. And in accepting this duty he gave over forever his interest in political competition, his inclinations and prejudices, and became a recording pen, a swiftly analyzing and classifying mind, a neutral medium for the preservation of the memory of great events.

His lively Irish heart often responded to the humors and contradictions and frailties of the men before him, but he took no part, as far as anyone could know, in their opinions, their struggles, and their quarrels. If he had ever revealed all that he learned, outside the record, if he had ever made posterity aware of all that he knew about the American Revolution, we should be a more enlightened people at the present moment. But although his old age was spent in writing busily, and he returned to that scholarship which had been his earliest interest, he never put on paper the intimate knowledge of men and affairs that he had acquired in the long years of toiling for his country. He took his place now and looked about him. Some of the gentlemen he had already met—that was Mr. John Adams, with whom he had talked at Thomas Mifflin's dinner a few days before his wedding. That was Colonel Washington of Virginia, who had been in Philadelphia before, attending the races. There was a man whom

he did not know, dressed in gray homespun, a tall, unassuming person with broad shoulders, who suggested a backwoods minister. Charles Thomson took up his pen and the man in homespun stirred in his chair. It was Patrick Henry. He got up to speak, and the Congress of the British Colonies in America was formally open.

As sometimes happens, the first moment of a great beginning sheds brief light upon much of what is to come later, even though the light may be temporarily eclipsed in the crowding events which are to follow. Patrick Henry, renowned for his oratory before the more familiar audience of the House of Burgesses, was now to raise his voice in a far more momentous assembly. As we look back upon it, we can take what he said as the presentation of a keynote speech, the farseeing introduction to the democratic principle.

"Today I am not a Virginian, but an American," he declared. This was not treason, to be made the most of by his opponents, although some of the Virginia delegates might have been sufficiently startled at the moment to think so. And he stated, as his speech went forward, a deep and necessary truth of democratic procedure. "If the vote is against me I am determined to abide by the will of the majority." It was a difficult lesson to master amid those differences, bitter, furious, and stubborn, which waxed and waned inside the bounds of the legislative chamber and of which, on account of the promises of secrecy, we know only the smallest part.

There was great diversity at first, opinions differing from man to man as well as from colony to colony. And before long there was withdrawal into two parties—those who thought the Congress was for the sole purpose of reconciliation with England, and those who wished to turn the debate to greater issues. The first group called themselves the "moderates," and for their opponents they had a stronger name. As young Edward Tilghman wrote later, informing his uncle of the reports going about

Philadelphia, "New Hampshire, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Virginia hang very much together. They are what we call violent and suspected of independency." To stand as a small minority against the natural timidity, against the distrust of change, against the clinging to security which dominated the minds of the majority; to feel the new pressure of liberty and freedom as it crowded an age of selfish conservatism; to be forward-looking in a time of confusion and hopeful in the face of every temptation to despair—that is what it was, in the years 1774, 1775, and 1776, to be a "violent" man.

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## CHAPTER IV

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### *Exit Joseph Galloway*

ON the very evening after the first meeting of the Congress, Joseph Galloway sat down to give a full report of transactions to his good friend William Franklin, the Royal Governor of New Jersey. There was no idea in Galloway's mind that he was on a different side from his friend or that he need have any reticences in the matters of what the Congress debated. He continued to keep Franklin informed, even after it was quite evident that such things should be held strictly within the bounds of the meeting itself. That Governor Franklin immediately and fully reported every word to his superior, the Earl of Dartmouth, was a matter of course, though he did have the grace to include in his letter the statement that the facts of the proceedings had been communicated to him in secret.

Galloway revealed candidly that he found to his regret that he had attempted to move too rapidly, and must now bide his time. He was a stubborn, short-tempered man, but for the sake of political achievement he could manage to be cautious and patient. He saw very soon just where lay that hard little kernel of resistance to his measures; he felt that it owed its being to that New England "republicanism" for which he had so little use. Once all the delegates had arrived, he made himself more busy than ever, setting up acquaintance with one colleague after another, flattering them, and, with the blindness of his own egregious vanity, flattering himself even more in his happy belief that they all agreed with him. When he felt that they had been closely enough enlisted in his views he laid before them privately the general outline of his great plan.

He had actually a fertile field in which to work. There was not a man there who did not long for a return to agreement with England, who would not have restored the former happy and prosperous relations if he could. Every instinct called for a keeping to the conservative way, to the safe and the familiar, even as the enormous prospect, the whole vision of human liberty, began to take shape before them. Thinking men earlier than this have looked for the cautiously just and have unwittingly accepted the reactionary. Joseph Galloway, polished, austere, subtly experienced in the arts of colonial politics, with the name of Benjamin Franklin behind him, looked very much like the appointed leader to carry them toward the peaceable accommodation with Great Britain which they all so greatly wanted. It might well be that he was just the man to suggest the first step. That was exactly what Joseph Galloway did, coming close to its being their last, as he fully intended that it should be. There were a few who were beginning to let themselves realize that accommodation might turn out to be impossible, there were actually a few who began to be certain that it could never be accomplished; but even these longed for the impossible. Galloway was clever enough to see that among the colonies there was so much diversity that their single point in common was their connection with England. Even over their differences with England they varied in degrees and kinds of opinion. An adroit man, in such circumstances, should be able to make the most of that uniting fact. The question among minds like William Franklin's and Governor John Penn's was whether Galloway would be adroit enough.

Adroitness does not combine well with vanity. And Joseph Galloway continued to prove himself a very vain man. While he gathered those around him who, he was sure, were convinced by his logic, he was quite unaware of how many he was alienating by the narrowness and selfishness of his policies. In his heart he had no patience with Boston, with her violence in the matter of the tea, with her dangerous tendency to listen to the will of the

common people. More and more often he referred, in private, to the New England delegates and their friends as the "violent" party. He strongly backed Ross's later motion that Massachusetts be left to find her own way out of her difficulties; he may indeed have originated the proposal. He realized fully the value of letting others present test propositions of whose outcome he was not quite sure. Even before this, people were aware of his real desire to abandon Massachusetts. He had felt so sure that the solid Mr. Ward of Rhode Island and the careful-thinking Sullivan of New Hampshire had come into close sympathy with him. He could hardly realize how every New Englander would draw away in distaste on getting a glimpse of his true feelings.

Two weeks after the first convening of the Congress, Paul Revere arrived in Philadelphia again. He was the bearer of another message from the people of Boston. Their representatives, standing for the County of Suffolk in which the city was situated, had met in secret first at Dedham, later, for safety, removing to Milton. They had drawn up a declaration, stating that the action of the King's ministry in closing the port of Boston was unconstitutional, and secondly that obedience to that measure was not required of them. The courage of that hard-pressed group of citizens, the directness of their statement, and the absence of any self-pity or regret swept the Congress with a wave of enthusiasm. In one brief morning they approved the conduct of Boston and the Suffolk Resolutions, recommended that Massachusetts persevere, and promised continued and increasing aid. John Adams recorded, at the conclusion of that morning's debate:

This was one of the happiest days of my life. In Congress we had generous, noble sentiments and manly eloquence. This day convinced me that America would support Massachusetts or perish with her.

There was one man who was not swept away. Joseph Galloway tried in vain to stem the tide of enthusiasm and sympathy. He called the resolves inflammatory, a direct declaration of war

against Great Britain; he declared that approval of them was treasonable. He had no one to support him but Duane; these two stood out against the vote of the others. They wished to enter their protest in writing and have it recorded on the minutes of the meeting, but they were thrust aside. As far as the world knew—for the Suffolk Resolutions and the approval of the Congress were at once made public—there had been no voice of disagreement. But, though unregistered in the minutes, the action of Galloway was not overlooked.

He had now another line of resistance: he was determined that the Nonimportation Agreement, the original suggestion of Boston which had brought the Congress together, should not pass. This, too, he declared, was treasonable, to which opinion he won small agreement. But when he argued further that it would do more harm to American commerce than to British, he was so near the truth that men began to listen to him. What gave him greater opportunity was the already visible cleavage of interests, of prosperous town against self-sustaining country, of exporter against producer for home consumption. More and more evident also was the vast difference in ideas and in approach to almost every problem manifested by members from north or south, with the political concepts of those from the proprietary colonies as a far from easy middle ground. Debate over the Nonimportation Agreement was the hottest and longest of any matter which had so far come under discussion; the struggle dragged on week after week with endless compromise, adjustment, advance, and retreat. When it passed, in principle, on September twenty-seventh, Joseph Galloway was sure that he could not hope, now, to gain any more advantage, that the time had come to make the proposal which, so he thought, would settle all matters, even the great future of Joseph Galloway.

In spite of all his reverses, in spite of the growing strength against him, he still had an excellent chance of accomplishing his purpose. He was proposing a method to achieve what all men



present deeply desired—peace, a way to redress grievances, an assurance of future rights. That it was the boldest and most drastic plan yet put before the Congress was nothing against it; the men there were in a mood to be bold if they could in any way preserve the good of the past. When, on September twenty-eighth, he stood up to present his plan, they all turned eagerly to listen, they all heard him through to the end.

"I am as much a friend of liberty as exists, and no man shall go farther in point of fortune or in point of blood than the man who now addresses you," he stated. But the way to achieve that liberty was not the way in which they were moving, he warned them, and it was his appointed lot to make clear to them the errors into which they were falling. Sedition in Massachusetts was growing, even in the very presence of the occupying army. By the treason of approving the Suffolk Resolves, the Congress had countenanced the laying of a foundation for military resistance. And now they had practically decided on the agreement for non-importation which could do nothing but bring about open rupture with Great Britain. What had the Congress been doing in the face of these problems? Little more than argue, differ, take up one principle, lay it down, and shift to another. He had waited in vain, he said, to see any reasonable system of reconciliation with England arise from their deliberations. It was hopeless; no such end would be achieved in the way that they were going. And was not reconciliation the end toward which they all wished to go? He begged that they would abandon, then and there, all the policies already embraced, for at the end of every avenue of suggestion loomed the dreadful prospect of war with England, a war which could mean nothing but the defeat and total ruin of America.

With such an introduction he had the attention of every man present. He had now to propose his own solution of the problem, the settlement of that question as to whether Parliament had the right to rule the colonies. Legally, he declared, there was no con-

stitutional basis for Parliamentary domination, but morally England's rights were unquestionable. It was not his purpose to propose establishing Parliament as their complete ruler; he had a better system to suggest. He would now unfold his idea, developed with careful thought, after consultation with deeply reasonable men, the plan of union between the colonies and Great Britain. Actually it was to give a constitution to America.

In rough outline he proposed to set up a colonial legislative body, a grand council, which was to be made up much as the Congress had been supposed to be, by representatives selected from the various colonial assemblies and appointed by them. This grand council was to elect its own speaker, and above the council was to be the President General of America, appointed by the King, whose consent must be given to every act passed by the council. Both President and council were to constitute "an inferior and distinct branch of the British legislature," united with it and subject to the combined assent of both Parliament and council for all measures passed in relation to the colonies.

He did not mention that, of those he had consulted, the readiest approval had come from a royal governor, William Franklin, who had suggested the amendment that there should be an "Upper House, consisting of some of the principal men of fortune, holding office for life." He did not say further that after he had submitted the idea to his old political chief, Benjamin Franklin, he got it back with the dry comment that "When I consider the extreme corruption prevalent among all orders of men in this old rotten state and the glorious public virtue so predominant in our rising country, I cannot but apprehend more mischief than benefit from a closer union." He told them only what he thought would persuade them.

At the close of Galloway's speech, James Duane was up at once to second the proposal. The Congress had really come together to lay a plan of accommodation with Great Britain, he said; that certainly was the understanding of the delegates from New York.

Unhappily, they had departed from that intention, and he urged with all his skill of debate that the idea be adopted. John Jay followed in his support. The plan gave up not one single liberty now in the hands of the American colonies, he argued, nor interfered with a single one of the rights America was claiming. Edward Rutledge thought it was as near as possible to being the perfect solution of all their difficulties. Patrick Henry thought otherwise. His judgment was like Benjamin Franklin's. Should America become part of the present English rule, the rule of a nation "which avows in the face of the world that bribery is a part of her system of government?" And while Galloway was replying to such criticism, an unidentified objector, probably John Adams, who preserved the record of the debate, raised the deeply significant possibility that Parliament and the ministry will "take advantage of such declaration to tax us, and will also reason from this acknowledgement to (exert) further power over us."

Here, although almost nobody else saw it, was appeasement, not accommodation; here was faltering resolution, determination weakened in the face of a possibility of peace. And, though no one in all that body had come so far in political reasoning so to denounce it, here was a plan set up on completely false principles, created by a man who avowed that in any system of government "there must be some absolute power to draw together all the wills," a man who thus described the opposing parties in the Congress, saying, "The one were men of loyal principles and possessed the greatest fortunes in America, the others were Congregational and Presbyterian republicans or men of bankrupt fortunes, overwhelmed in debt to the British merchants."

Galloway had lost the support of Samuel Ward, but in winning over Stephen Hopkins, also of Rhode Island, he insured what had happened before, that the two delegates from that colony differed and nullified their votes. Georgia not being represented, there remained eleven colonies to consider the question. It was one of the rules of the Congress that no motion could be voted on

the same day that it was proposed ; there were, moreover, no provisions in any of the delegates' instructions for entering on such a plan of union. It was settled, therefore, that the matter would be taken up later. Five colonies were for discarding it at once, but six voted to continue consideration and, so Galloway declared later, passed the resolution that "the colonies hold in abhorrence the idea of being considered independent communities (and) most ardently desire a political union not only among themselves but with the Mother State."

With this much Galloway had to be content. The real intention "to prevail on the Congress to take the grounds of negotiation and proposition," as he wrote to Governor Franklin, had really been accomplished. He must continue now his persuasions among his fellow delegates. Even though he had pronounced the Non-importation Agreement a treasonable act, he signed it with the idea, so he gave as excuse, "of preventing them from proceeding to more violent measures."

During all this time, as September went by slowly and with breathless heat, other essential matters were taking their due course of development. When the Congress first convened, the mere act of getting acquainted was a necessity above every other. Through the rising period of Galloway's influence, through the forming of committees and the drawing up of common reports, impressions were being made, friendships were forming over dinner tables at great houses, at suppers in the Long Room of the City Tavern where many of the members ate regularly, or in talks through the evening in the little converted parlors of the private lodgings.

John Adams met Colonel Washington of Virginia and found him stately, good-mannered, and reserved. Silas Deane saw him "with a hard countenance yet with a very young look, and an easy soldier-like air and gesture."

George Washington dined, soon after his arrival, with John Dickinson at Fairhill. Richard Bland of Virginia liked to tell

people at dinner that he would have come to the Congress had it been held in Jericho. Richard Henry Lee, also of Virginia, rising to debate a small point before the Congress, found Mr. John Adams of Massachusetts getting up to support him. South was feeling out north and politely concealing surprise at the manifest differences of ideas which came to light. Silas Deane, who was easily impressed by a confident air and finished manners, declared naïvely that all the southern delegates seemed to be people of importance. John Adams, who was less likely to be dazzled by manners different from his own, was wondering at the size of the dinners—the beef, veal, duck, sillabubs, jellies, and confections of a single meal, and the amount of port and Madeira which he was called upon to consume. He was prone at first to think rather well of everyone, and found it a great shock when Patrick Henry, during an evening in his lodgings over a committee report, loosed his own ideas concerning some of their fellow members. "He had a horrid opinion of Galloway and the Rutledges," Adams recorded. Henry told Adams that he would like to expose them and all their machinations, which would be the ruin of the country.

It had been early noted by a number of persons that the company of the Congress numbered, all told, fifty-six members, of whom twenty-two were lawyers. Of these last, especially of those from the south, a good proportion had been educated in England and had been introduced to the intricacies of the British Constitution through the revered medium of the study of law at the Middle Temple. Those men were most of them imbued with the idea that the only answer to the problem now before them was through legal and constitutional means, that here was no question of ideals and abstractions, but the mere matter of finding the right political adjustment. There must be some agreement with the British government which would serve to redress all grievances and settle everything satisfactorily.

Richard Henry Lee was one of those who had gone to school in

England, but only as a boy until his father's death brought about his return home. There had been no opportunity for him to enter legal training at the Middle Temple as was intended and as his older brothers had done. When he compared notes with other men's recollections of England, it was plain that his were only a boy's impressions of green hedges and venerable buildings and friendly dusk over playing fields. He had no illusions now, however, as to what real generosity was to be counted on at this juncture from that country of both romance and hardheaded ministers. Yet he was oversanguine, as he was often prone to be, and thought that, once the notice of a nonimportation agreement were sent abroad, word of England's willingness to compromise would come back by the next ship. But between him and John Adams there was the bond of knowing that this difference with the mother country was something far wider than a legal quarrel.

Young Edward Rutledge, at one of their earliest meetings at the house of Dr. Shippen, took occasion to tell John Adams that he had received his legal training at the Middle Temple, and went on to observe tactfully that he was convinced that "every young gentleman should travel early, since that freedom and ease of behavior which is so necessary cannot be acquired but early in life." These two were to have an odd intercourse, with moments of agreement and moments of sharply clashing differences of opinion. Edward Rutledge, though drawn by all tastes and temperament to the moderate party, could never really get away from his admiration for the short, serious man from Massachusetts. Adams, on his side, thought of Rutledge, first as "a young spirited body," when they were still in agreement and, when they had just had a passage at arms in debate, characterized him as "a perfect Bob-o-Lincoln, a swallow, a sparrow, a peacock," none of these ornithological comparisons being meant for compliments.

Acquaintances were forming also with those outside the circle of the Congress, for all doors of hospitality were open to the delegates and every man of importance in Philadelphia made haste to

entertain them. It was very pleasant to be asked here and there as a representative of an important colony. The social intercourse and the friends he made were a tonic to John Adams. The house which he and his cousin Sam frequented most was that of Dr. Benjamin Rush, delightful bachelor quarters looking out over the Delaware. Rush was a brilliant and attractive fellow; while studying medicine in Edinburgh he had first imbibed the idea that there could be other government than that of kingly rule. He was eagerly curious as to what was to come, but still distinctly on the side of carefulness and moderation. His immediate liking for the two Adamses was the best sign of that developing liberalism which was to be his real guide in later life.

John Adams met, also, Joseph Reed, the associate of Thomas Mifflin and Charles Thomson. After one of the gargantuan dinners, he and Reed still contrived to climb the stairs of Christ Church spire at evening and see the city spread out, the broad Delaware with its rich burden of shipping, the road leading to Philadelphia from Wilmington along which a rider as important in history as Paul Revere was presently to gallop, and the road from New York and the north which was to feel the tread of a conquering army.

One day an invitation arrived, asking the New England delegates to Carpenter's Hall "to communicate a little business." They accepted in anticipation of a pleasant evening, like so many others, of meeting potential new friends and of some very solid entertainment. They were ushered into the great room to find rows of solemn gentlemen in broad-brimmed hats seated at the tables, and they were immediately addressed by Mr. Israel Pemberton, of whom they had all heard as the leading Quaker of Philadelphia and possibly the most orthodox. It was not an address of welcome, but a catechizing in the most formidable of language.

Was it not true, Pemberton inquired, that the men of New England were asking all the colonies to act with Massachusetts in

supporting the liberties of her charter? How could they so ask when the charter itself contained laws of such intolerance that Friends and Anabaptists in Massachusetts sent constant complaints of them? Did they call it liberty of conscience when these denominations had to pay taxes to support and give countenance to the churches to which they did not belong?

Among the dumfounded New Englanders, it fell to John Adams to make the first reply. And he, as forthright as they, said baldly that he could not offer the faintest hope that the regulation of Massachusetts in this regard could be changed. "They could as well turn the heavenly bodies out of their annual and diurnal courses as the people of Massachusetts from the meetinghouse and Sunday laws." And then, warming to the task, the whole New England delegation rallied to the defense of Massachusetts, two of them lawyers by training and all of them logically minded, as those who are nourished on Puritan sermons learn to become. Cushing and Samuel Adams gave complete account and justification of certain petitions and complaints presented to the General Court which were evidently the source of this accusation, while Paine and John Adams followed with a legal explanation which should have been "to the entire satisfaction of impartial men." The unfortunate evening came to an end, but the memory of that session of inquisition and reproach rankled long and served to remind the members from New England, in the midst of other and more kindly hospitalities, that they were, after all, men being watched as coming from an alien land.

The official business of the Congress had opened on September seventh, inaugurated by a reading of a psalm and a prayer by the Reverend Jacob Duché, the best known minister in Philadelphia. It was an occasion of solemn importance for all these men, gathered in defiance of the King's wish to debate matters that could well be called treasonable. Every person present was in a mood to be moved deeply by the simple religious ceremony. And the psalm chosen, the thirty-fifth, "Plead my cause, O Lord



with them that strive with me . . . take hold of shield and buckler and stand up for mine help," was one to go straight to every anxious heart. Duché's prayer was earnest, sincere, convincing, and not one man was ashamed to show emotion. Duché himself was a weak vessel from which to pour that impassioned plea to the Almighty. Before the Revolution had gone very far he began to falter; he lost heart finally, and wrote his famous letter to General Washington urging him to abandon the hopeless struggle. It was not now the voice of his single praying, but the sincere response in the heart of every patriotic man which carried that petition upward to bring the help of heaven to the new country. "Stir up thyself, and awake to my judgment, even unto my cause, my God and my Lord."

From the first, the Congress had set itself two main objectives, and for this purpose chose two central committees, one for a Statement of Rights and Grievances, one To Examine Manufacture and Trade. In the first, Galloway and Duane kept them long from coming to any conclusion, until the elder Rutledge declared that John Adams was the best person to draw up some statement to which they could all subscribe, which John Adams accordingly did. Examination of Manufacture and Trade led directly to the debate and the drawing up the agreement for nonimportation, a measure arrived at in principle toward the end of September, but sharply debated for many days thereafter and disputed as to detail of lumber and pimiento, indigo and flaxseed, sugar, coffee, and molasses. This was the great work of the Congress of 1774, the specific task for which it actually had been called together. Two months, even at this day and age, seem not very long for the organization, the learning to work together, and the coming to agreement in so large a matter. It was after the middle of October that the real fruits of toil began to appear and there were drawn up, not only the important document of the Association for Non-importation and Nonexportation, but the first of the truly great state papers which make this first Congress memorable, composi-

tions of such clarity and justice and powerful expression as to win the praise of the great Lord Chatham himself. These were, in particular, the Declaration to the People of Great Britain, and the Address to the King. Congress had a sense of authorship, and history witnesses how well they chose the hand whenever such an important document was to be composed. Along with the notice of the Association for Nonimportation were to be sent the two statements which were to complement that challenge, one the address to such friends in England as would be ready to understand the position of the colonies, the other a petition to the King himself, asking that he set right the grievances of "his most loyal subjects" before it was too late.

The committee for writing the very delicate and important Declaration to the People of Great Britain was made up of Richard Henry Lee, William Livingston of New Jersey, and his young son-in-law, John Jay of New York. It seemed to be understood from the first that Lee was to have the real writing of the paper, and it was presented by the committee for approval on October eighteenth. The submitted version was read; there was a great silence of disappointment, very like dismay. Richard Henry Lee, though so able an orator, had failed to be convincing on paper; he had, it seemed, been neither forcible nor persuasive, and, as many thought, had gone much too far in his criticisms and in his defiance of the King's government.

When debate on the paper was opened the next day, a few gentlemen got up and faintly suggested alterations, but it soon became plain that the alterations necessary would sweep the original away. Then William Livingston arose, a tall, awkward man but with the dignity and force of the Livingston prestige behind him. He ventured to suggest that a friend "had prepared a few notes" on the same subject which it might be appropriate to hear also; with the permission of the Congress he would read them. Since there was only one other member of the committee,

the name of the author could not be very much in doubt, and the Congress turned to take a concerted look at John Jay, the young lawyer who must be responsible for what was now being set forth. When it was seen in the preliminary discussion of the day before that the original draft would scarcely be acceptable to the Congress, Livingston had urged Jay to complete his tentative draft, and as a result the young man had spent most of the night laboring over it. Today, then, the thin oval of his face was pale, his hair was very whitely powdered against his black coat, his deep-set, very dark eyes were hollow with late toil. Livingston read awkwardly, but there was no quenching the fine fire, the beautiful ease, and the ascending force of conviction with which the address was written.

When a nation, led to greatness by the hand of liberty, and possessed of all the glory that heroism, munificence, and humanity can bestow, descends to the ungrateful task of forging chains for her Friends and children. . . .

A ripple went through the room, faces brightened, friends exchanged glances with smiles of relief. This was America speaking, this was the tone, the true voice, which they had longed to hear. A lawyer's summary, a patriot's plea for fair treatment, a courageous man's direct and just assailing of the very source of the difficulty—all were there.

Now mark the progression of the ministerial plan for enslaving us—

Dispassionately it was set forth, how one gross error had been added to another in the hope of covering the first. And here, finally, was the remedy.

We hope that the magnanimity and justice of the British nation will furnish a Parliament of such wisdom, independence, and public spirit as may save the violated rights of the whole empire . . . and thereby restore that harmony, friendship, and fraternal affection . . . so ardently wished for by every true and honest American.

The paper was approved with scarcely a suggestion of change. Richard Henry Lee did not take his reverse with a very good grace, nor was he above insinuating, later, that it was Livingston himself who had composed the document. He and Jay were already drawing to opposite sides and parties, and this incident did nothing to contract the gulf between them.

When the main outline of the Association for Nonintercourse was settled, the Congress began to move at a quicker tempo. If there was to be a cessation of commerce with Britain, dating from some day early in the next year, it behooved every member there to get home and set in order his business or his plantation, even his farm or his law affairs. If England did not weaken, there would be such a change in every man's livelihood as would require energetic preparation, much taking of advantage of last opportunities, much tightening of belts for hard days to come. Committees, which were accustomed to meet as early as seven in the morning, redoubled their efforts and brought in their reports. The last details of the Association had to be adjusted. There was the Petition to the King still unreported. And no man had forgotten that Joseph Galloway and his plan were still to be dealt with.

Opposition to him had been hardening still more, but had never so far come into anything like visible collision with his views. It was, in truth, Samuel Adams who was the chief instrument for saving the Congress from Joseph Galloway, at a moment when they might have embraced the easy way out. It was rather the pose among many of the members to speak slightly of this shabby, not very well favored gentleman who, except for his friendship with John Hancock, had no high connections and a multitude of low ones. His powers of debate were small: though he could speak directly and forcibly, his heavy voice and awkward delivery put him at a disadvantage among the established orators, with their easy fluency. But men were drawing about him, at-

tracted by his sturdy logic, his undoubted honesty, and his powers of quietly arranging and organizing resistance, men who were repulsed by the confident arrogance of Joseph Galloway. John Adams was his cousin's able abettor in the unostentatious marshaling of strength against the men who favored the plan of union. One of the alluring virtues of the Galloway program was the number of high political positions it would afford for men in the colonies. One of its weaknesses was the plainness with which men could discern which of the high roles Galloway had in mind for himself. Speaker of the Grand Council at least! Who knew but it might also be appointment to be President General, as a mark of appreciation from a grateful king? The earnest longing for peaceful settlement was never again so evident as it was now, never came so near to betrayal into pure expediency. But that "interest out of doors," so often cursed by a losing advocate, was making headway. Direct opposition to the plan of union by the New Englanders would have drawn down upon them that accusation of wanting independency which they had so faithfully promised to avoid. John Adams remarked in a letter to a friend:

We have been obliged to act with great delicacy and caution. We have been obliged to keep ourselves out of sight, and to feel pulses and sound depths, to insinuate our sentiments, designs, and desires by means of other persons, sometimes of one province, sometimes of another.

It was a method which had its own results. Galloway said, in angry bitterness, of Samuel Adams, "He eats little, drinks little, sleeps little, thinks much, and is most decisive and indefatigable in the pursuit of his objects." It was known to Galloway, as to others, that Samuel Adams was the real inspiration of the Suffolk Resolutions.

On October sixth, Paul Revere, always a messenger of ill omen for the side loyal to the King, arrived with news that Governor Gage, in spite of the remonstrance of the Congress, had pro-

ceeded with his fortifications and had begun seizing the cannon which were the property of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Samuel Adams, so Galloway raged afterward, knew just how to make the most of these tidings so as to render the mood for acceptance of the plan utterly beyond recapture. Yet Joseph Galloway had really no outward proof that in this man was the source of the resistance that brought his scheme to ruin. It was not even open struggle on the debating floor that ended the matter, but a meeting at the City Tavern the night before the measure was to be discussed again. Not only were sufficient voices mustered there to vote down the proposal next day, but it was arranged that a motion should be made and carried to expunge from the record of the Congress any mention that such a plan had ever been considered. There is the laconic mention in Samuel Ward's diary, October twenty-second, "Met, dismissed the plan for a union, etc.," and it was all over. Charles Thomson drew his pen through the entry in his minutes, "Here insert Mr. Galloway's motion and plan." The great and dangerous project of his proposed union with Britain was borne down by the hands of those whom Galloway so furiously described as "the violent party." It disappeared without a trace, save for a bitter censure later by the British ministry upon the colonies for "first receiving a plan for uniting the colonies to the mother country and afterwards rejecting it and ordering their first resolution to be erased out of the minutes."

It was perhaps the most painful thought of all for Galloway that the final downfall of his proposal was witnessed by his bitterest political enemy. The fact was also a mark of his waning influence. One of the questions which had gone round about Philadelphia had been the continuous query, "Where is John Dickinson?" Everyone began finally to ask, "Why is not Mr. Dickinson a member of the Congress?" The one man of whom all the colonies had heard, the one name they all spoke with respect, was

excluded from the list of members and, so it presently came to be known, had been kept out by the influence of Joseph Galloway. Murmurs grew louder, Pennsylvania became aware of the strictures upon her politics. On October first, with the new elections to the Assembly, John Dickinson was returned to his former place there. Only a few days later, when a vacancy occurred in the Pennsylvania representation, he was appointed, on the motion of George Ross, as a delegate to the Congress. He took his seat on October seventeenth, in time to hear the adoption of John Jay's Address to the People of Great Britain, and the final debates over the articles of the Association.

A Memorial to the Inhabitants of the British Colonies, giving report of the actions and motives of the Congress, had been adopted, the authorship, Richard Henry Lee's, being more satisfactory this time. It was followed by a Letter Addressed to the Inhabitants of the Province of Quebec, with John Dickinson appointed to the committee for composing it. There remained the last important document, the projected Petition to the King. There was no question but that this also would be a difficult paper to compose, and the committee to which it was entrusted was Richard Henry Lee, John Adams, Thomas Johnson of Maryland, John Rutledge of South Carolina, and Patrick Henry. The original draft was written by Patrick Henry and was, like the Address to the People of Great Britain in its first version, a painful disappointment. The tone of asperity in which it was couched seemed not in the least to carry out the intended idea of loyal affection and a desire for happy settlement of all difficulties. The Congress did not approve it and asked for a new draft, and, as it so often did, added John Dickinson to the committee. Therefore, in the nine days of his participation in the Congress, Dickinson had as large and important a part as any of those who had sat from the beginning. This was not the same Dickinson who had received with hesitation and reluctance the invitation to ad-

dress the meeting at the City Tavern. His mind was one to weigh all sides and possibilities of a question with the deepest care and then, with a decision once reached, to hold to it conscientiously and tenaciously. He had come to his own conclusions now ; he was convinced that settlement with England could be achieved and that it was the duty of every true patriot to work for that as a final consummation of the efforts of the Congress.

His Petition to the King—for it was written entirely by his hand—was commended for the directness and moderation of its summary of grievances and the respectful affection of its final declarations of loyalty. As we read it now, in comparison with the other papers of the Congress, we can see that it is the work of an able writer of pronounced political sentiments, yet without the moving dignity of the style of John Jay's document. But it was, in truth, a much more difficult epistle to prepare. The Congress met on October twenty-sixth to approve and sign the last documents and to dissolve itself. Unless the British government had taken measures to redress the declared grievances before May of next year, they were to gather again. The last formality was a dinner at the City Tavern for all the members and for the distinguished gentlemen of Philadelphia who had shown them such gracious hospitality. Next day they all set out, their faces turned happily homeward.

John Dickinson returned to Fairhill, relieved and content. He had every reason to be satisfied with his own part in the transactions, brief as his term of service had been. All things had moved in the direction which he had desired ; he could well believe that the end dearest to his heart, accommodation with England with no loss of respect and justice, had been furthered by the meeting of the men of the colonies. He was sure that he had good cause to feel relief, to feel hope, to feel due satisfaction. John Adams, toiling over the northward road in a great rain, was of another mind.



The answer to the difference in their opinions was to lie in the fate of the Petition to the King, already being carried to London in the hands of Captain Morwick. Thither the thread of historical narrative follows it, to note the progress of the idea of liberty in men's minds until the Congress should meet again.

### *The Friends of America— The Commons*

CONCERNING a moment of great importance for both British and American history, the most impressive report is probably the official record, which states that "His Majesty, being seated on the Throne, adorned with his crown and regal ornaments and attended by his Officers of State (the Lords being in their robes) commanded the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod to let the Commons know 'It is His Majesty's pleasure that they attend him immediately in this House.' "

Thus, in Westminster Palace, on November twenty-ninth, 1774, was opened that Parliament whose momentous accomplishment was to separate the American colonies forever from the British Empire.

A spectator from afar, having obtained admission to the ceremony through the good offices of a friend, had succeeded in making his way to a place near the very foot of the throne and was watching the ceremony, the commission to the Black Rod and the entry of the Commons, with an unabashed lack of reverence. Young Josiah Quincy, very zealous in the cause of America and her rights, had but recently arrived in London from Braintree, Massachusetts, traveling on the rather vague commitment of "doing some good in the ensuing winter at the court of Great Britain." The unquestioning confidence of enthusiasm had impelled him to the long and difficult journey. This was his first glimpse of the assembled might of political London and he could hardly have viewed it from a better vantage point. They were

all there, Peers and Commons in attendance on their sovereign, about to take their parts in the great events before them and before mankind.

Only John Wilkes was absent from among the Commons. He had been ejected often enough from that august body, but now was actually to take his seat, within a few days, as member for Middlesex and as Lord Mayor of London. William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, was not present with the Lords; he was nursing his strength at home for that last great effort of his public life, the defense of the colonies against the infatuated policy of the King, Lord North, and Lord Mansfield. But any friend at Josiah's elbow, pointing out this distinguished person and that, as one always does for a newcomer, could assure him that few were missing. One Lord in his robes may have looked much like another under the powdered wigs, in the blaze of the wax candles, with only the flash of a jeweled order for a distinguishing sign, or the ribbon of the Garter. Amongst the Commons, the austere, scarred, ugly face of Barré must already have stood out, the long-nosed, Irish countenance of Burke, the merry look of Fox. Sir Fletcher Norton, slated to be Speaker, was already sulking because no promise of a peerage to come later went with the honor.

At the first moment a stranger would probably make little of those rows of faces, haughty, intelligent, humorous, humble, kind, implacable. But from Quincy's further record we are able to learn more of these important personages. In that great drama of the advance of political liberty, here was the rising curtain of the English scene. And thanks to Quincy's journal and to the contemporary records which it focuses and clarifies, we are now able to say against which persons of the play, in this action, we may set the caption: Friends of America.

The lively observer of this phase of the drama, a lawyer and author of a modest pamphlet entitled *Observations on the Boston Port Bill*, had already made something of a name for himself in Massachusetts and had an extraordinarily wide acquaintance

throughout the colonies. As still a very young man indeed, beginning his law practice in the region of Boston, he had been associated with a famous case. In 1770 occurred that disturbance which goes by the name of the Boston Massacre, an unexpected incident of bloodshed which would have ranked as little more than a street brawl had it not been so significant an incident in the rising tumult of feeling between colony and Britain. The man responsible for ordering his soldiers to fire, the British officer Captain Preston, as well as his squad of soldiers, was tried for murder in the Boston courts.

It was necessary that someone defend them, and at Preston's own request, Josiah Quincy undertook the thankless task. Not only his friends, but even his father, Josiah Quincy, Sr., reproached him bitterly for taking the part of a man against whom public opinion was so violent. But young Quincy was unshaken; he was joined in the case by his connection-by-marriage, John Adams, and together the two saw that justice was accorded a man whose superior officers and whose friends all seem to have deserted him. Contrary to any expectation, even probably that of the counsel, Preston was acquitted of responsibility for the deaths; only two of the soldiers suffered any penalty, being branded on the hand for manslaughter. In his speech, laying the responsibility of life and death upon the court and urging them not to be moved by the violence of public indignation, Josiah Quincy quoted the "Pennsylvania Farmer," John Dickinson. "Hot, rash, disorderly proceedings injure the reputation of a people." The court took heed of his warnings, considered the matter in sober thought, and absolved Preston of guilt.

Although Quincy went on from this beginning to remarkable professional success, the promise of an unusual career at the bar was presently interrupted by the complete breakdown of his health. It was the advice of doctors at that time, when a patient showed symptoms of tuberculosis, to send him on a long journey, preferably by sea, trusting in good results in spite of the discom-

forts of shipboard, the exposure, and the bad food. Quincy, combining necessity with an unquenchable appetite for political matters, sailed for Charleston, South Carolina, and, on finding his state of health somewhat improved when he arrived, undertook to return by land, making a leisurely progress through North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, picking up every kind of acquaintance and connection by the way. Thus he came to know men of the distant colonies long before north and south were introduced to each other by the Congress. He met the two Lynches, father and son, and the Rutledge brothers. He listened with deep respect and admiration to Edward Rutledge's accounts of his law studies at the Middle Temple, and transcribed a whole book of his notes for future use. He heard Christopher Gadsden speak in the Assembly and called him "plain, blunt, hot, and incorrect, though very sensible."

As he traveled northward he continued to make acquaintances and to see countless people of whom America was to take note later. His stay in Philadelphia, where he set up a warm friendship with Joseph Reed and with John Dickinson, was the high point of his travels. Dickinson came to see him, asked him to dine at Fairhill, discussed politics with him and sounded his views. Quincy was carried away by admiration for this man of affairs, an established political writer, a keen and interesting thinker. But he was not overwhelmed by him, however. In the correspondence which followed between the two, Dickinson wrote him from Philadelphia just before the sitting of the Congress, a letter which was completely characteristic of the Dickinson thinking, and received a characteristic answer.

"Nothing can throw us into a pernicious confusion but one colony's breaking the line of opposition and advancing too hastily before the rest. The one which dares to betray the common cause by rushing forward . . . will inevitably and utterly perish." So spoke the Pennsylvania Farmer, and thus replied the young man in Boston:

"If a colony thus insulted, galled from without, and vexed from within, should seem to advance and break 'the line of opposition,' ought it to incur the heavy censure of betraying the common cause? . . . I see no reason to apprehend our advancing before our brethren, unless the plans they should adopt should very evidently be too languid and spiritless to give any rational hopes of safety to us in our adherence to them."

In the same letter Josiah gave his friend notice of his impending journey to England. There could have been no question of sending a man in his state of health to represent Massachusetts in the Congress, but Quincy, ordered by the doctors to attempt the cure of more travel, had appointed for himself the task of carrying information concerning America to London. And he spoke of the journey, as did every American of that time, as "going home." He went off gaily, promising to write to everyone, assuring his doubtful father that the voyage would be the restoration of his health, eager and curious as to what was before him. He arrived in England in November, 1774, with letters to Benjamin Franklin and just in time to see the political season open in London.

In the American Congress, already met and dispersed, not a single voice had been raised to suggest separation from the parent country. Yet in this Parliament now opening, the matter of American independence was openly discussed and recognized as a complete possibility. Here, on the threshing floor of those great debates, were winnowed out, as they had not been before, the truths of what actually constituted political freedom. Completion of those truths was to be carried forward in the more limited, more intense atmosphere of Independence Hall, where the great Declaration was argued between the moderates and the violent men with heat, confusion, and division up to the day that it was finally passed. But it should not be forgotten how important and courageous was the conduct of that group in Eng-

land which openly sided with America as the breach between colonies and King's government rapidly widened.

Brilliant and penetrating like Fox and Burke, steadfastly honest like Conway, stubbornly just like Keppel, they stood on the side of fairness and human freedom, not in greatness of numbers but in greatness of belief and of gifts. Much has been said, lately in particular, by novelists and historians, to remind us that the American Revolution was, in this country, a civil war, and that there were many on this side of the Atlantic who preserved their loyalty to the King. Less often have been counted those important or those merely honest persons who supported the American cause within England and within Parliament, men who considered the coming struggle a civil war in a different sense, a civil war of Englishmen, not Americans.

With these men Josiah Quincy, warm, eager for his cause and charming in his manner, made acquaintance during the winter which he spent in London. Franklin introduced him to many. Arthur Lee, Franklin's deputy, liked the young man immediately and took him into a different set of friends. Distinguished men sought him out of their own accord. The King's ministry noted him and threw out hints to ascertain whether he could be bribed. Some of the great men of his day he saw only in action in Parliament, where he attended often. Some he knew only by hearsay, through the knowledge and understanding of others. But the observations of this young lawyer from the provinces, committed to his diary and to his letters in his lodgings near the Haymarket, many times after midnight and at the end of a long and exhausting day, show, oftentimes, as clear an insight into the real truth as that of any of the statesmen he described. He was able to say in a confidential letter to his wife, "I have been taught to believe that I have spoken conviction to many sensible minds."

The political scene upon which he was looking was one not only of portent but of splendor. The greatest names in the his-

tory of Parliament stand on the records of the time. The elder Pitt, a dying lion, was still before the public eye; his second son, young Mr. William, was just beginning to be noticed as a youth of possibilities. Burke and Fox were rising to the height of their glory. Yet among those who stood by the American cause, the honors for long service and steadfast adherence to a single issue may well go to General Henry Conway.

Younger brother of the Duke of Hertford, he was first cousin to the observant and politically astute Horace Walpole. Conway's career, successful though it was, is an odd illumination of the lot of younger sons in great houses. He entered the army, as younger sons should, distinguished himself at Fontenoy and Maestricht, but for years seemed to be pursued by perpetual bad fortune as to military preferment. Only after he entered politics did he come into his own, and rose to be a secretary of state in the early government of the Duke of Rockingham. It was Conway who first moved in the Cabinet for the repeal of the Stamp Act, declaring even then that the effect of its policy would be to lose the colonies. He sat in Parliament for Thetford, a borough which was within the control of his ducal brother. Yet when the new Parliament was in process of election in the autumn of 1774, it was found that the Duke of Hertford was going to meet resistance in some of his safe boroughs, so that he wished to reserve those remaining for his three sons. The lot of a peer's younger brother was apparently even lower than that of his younger son, so that for a time it seemed that Henry Conway's political career was at a standstill. Horace Walpole busied himself with energy and determination in his cousin's behalf, and in the end, under the patronage of the Duke of Grafton, Lord Hertford's father-in-law, the representation of Bury St. Edmunds was allotted to General Conway. Once returned to Parliament, he was considered of such importance that the ministry wished to appoint him commander-in-chief of the armies in America. But the King was privately warned that, if the place were of-



ferred, Conway would refuse to serve and that his example would be followed by others.

Although, like many of the rest, he failed to understand the action that was reported as that of a lawless Massachusetts mob casting the East India Company's tea into Boston Harbor, Conway very soon after became convinced that it was, after all, the act of thinking and determined men. Thus he had given his vote to the Boston Port Bill as a punitive measure, but rectified his error and was among the first to take an open stand for America. Through the long, dragging war he was untiring in his efforts for conciliation and peace. And finally it was he who, in February of 1782, rose in his place to propose the bill that admitted the impossibility of subjugating the American colonies by force and that authorized the beginning of negotiations for peace. "The effect of his speech was incredible," a contemporary report says. The members of the House, long convinced of what they would not admit aloud, hastened to fall in with his proposal and, after desperate resistance by some Tories, carried the bill that both ended the war and brought the fall of the King's ministry. A quiet, handsome man, Conway was said to be, accused by his adversaries of being irresolute, but never faltering in his honest belief in liberty for America. Walpole obviously had much influence over him, and it is reported that Conway once played Bingley to Walpole's Darcy, when, as a young man, he was desperately in love with the daughter of the Duke of Grafton, but was persuaded by Walpole not to declare his passion. With the end of the King's personal rule, Conway returned to the Cabinet, and he ended his life as field marshal, an enthusiastic witness of the rising greatness of the independent United States.

There could hardly be a more distinct, total, or violent contrast to Conway than his brother-in-arms, the Irish Colonel Isaac Barré. Tall, massive, hideously disfigured by a scarred cheek which was the souvenir of his campaign with Wolfe at Quebec, Barré was always in the slashing forefront of Parliamentary

battle. Once, after a violent verbal attack on an opponent, he paused for a bite of refreshment, and a neighboring member was heard to murmur in wonder, "Does it eat biscuit? I thought it had fed on raw flesh!" In hot, impulsive wrath against the "American mob," Barré, too, voted for the Boston Port Bill, but like Conway, avowed his mistake in the next debate and was henceforth the strong partisan of the American cause. A certain Mr. Van, little known to history except for this one occasion, stood up to declare in Parliament that, in his opinion, the prosperity of the colonies was a direct threat to the commerce of England. His contribution to the sharply pointed Latin quotations with which every spearhead of oratory was tipped, produced this already famous one, *Delenda est Carthago*. Barré, with potent ridicule, pulverized the "gentleman under the gallery" and his little squeak of Latin. Colonel Barré had taken part in that war which saw the defeat of Braddock and the capture of Louisburg; he had traveled in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York, and he could always answer any of those complacent officers who undertook to declare that Americans never could or would resist British forces. It was he who first called protesting Americans "sons of liberty."

He was more violent even than Burke in the wild Irish temper of some of his attacks, but his thunderbolts were likely to be mingled with Irish bulls, to the delight of the House. In the debate on the Boston Port Bill he declared of Boston, "She is your eldest son," and added in the same breath, "she is a noble prop . . . cherish and support her." Late in February, 1775, Lord North offered his Conciliatory Resolution, providing that any colony who admitted the right of Parliament to lay taxes upon her be permitted to raise and spend the money in her own way. It was an effort to divide the colonies and subdue them one by one, but Barré pricked the bubble of its plausibility by declaring, "The Americans are not such gudgeons as to be caught with any such foolish bait."

A third and completely unique personage who was warm for America was John Wilkes. His is an almost legendary figure, yet perhaps can be brought to earth more truly through his connection with the cause of the colonies than in any other way. He was already famous in America, for the cry of "Wilkes and Liberty" had by this time echoed far across the world. Men saw him now with his tumultuous early life behind him: his education at the University of Leyden, his ill-fated, wretched marriage, his outlawry and imprisonment for his attacks on the government through his paper, the *North Briton*. Time after time he had been elected to Parliament as representative from Middlesex, time after time his rightful seat had been taken from him and given to Colonel Luttrell, the candidate favored by the King's party. Now, at last, Parliament had given in. With the added office of Lord Mayor of London he took his seat in December of 1774 and remained there, unshaken, to vote steadily for justice to America.

His strong leadership was behind the succession of petitions to the King from the City of London, desiring that the breach with the colonies be healed for the good of British trade. So weary did King George become of delegations from the City, headed by the Lord Mayor, that he vowed he would receive "those fellows in furs" no more. But receive them he did, since the unconquerable Wilkes stood on their rights and would brook no refusal. Humble, courteous, and respectful as the petitions always were at the opening, the sharp truth and the demand for reasonable justice cut through the later text. Wilkes, with his gold chain and robes of office, offering the paper on half-bent knee, was a man whose spirit refused to bend. His keen-featured, sharply observant face had that faintly diabolic cast which Hogarth has caught and preserved for all time. A friend of Fox and of Shelburne, the most highly hated of any man who had incurred King George's enmity, he went his stubborn way and made the watchword "Wilkes and Liberty" stand for something

more than the quarrel between the King and Middlesex. The group of his immediate following made a solid phalanx: his brother-in-law Hayley, Alderman Sawbridge, Alderman Bull, Alderman William Lee. The last was an established English merchant although he was born in America and was brother of Richard Henry Lee whose leadership in Virginia and in the Congress was already bitterly known to those close to the King.

One of Wilkes' associates at Leyden was William Dowdeswell, who was now in Parliament as representative of the family seat at Tewkesbury, and who was, perhaps, so his contemporaries thought, of no brilliant parts, but an indefatigable and loyal follower of what he thought to be just. He was the political right-hand man of Edmund Burke; he had been Chancellor of the Exchequer and had distinguished himself by refusing to add to his own fortune among all the opportunities for financial advantage which the ministry could lay before him. He was practically alone in his instant opposition to the Boston Port Bill, standing up stoutly against Lord North and declaring that he disapproved of the measure and would give his negative to it since the "House was about to do a great mischief." He never withdrew from that position of disapproval, although he did not live to vote for final peace with America nor to see the restoration of good relations. There were a goodly number like him, of whom so short a summary cannot make mention, less conspicuous men who are, nevertheless, memorable for seeing the truth when their infinitely more numerous antagonists did not. There was William Dunning, whom Lord Shelburne called "a shining pleader," a man of courage, wit, prejudice, and honor, who had made an important name, good with some, bad with others, for his courage as legal counsel for John Wilkes. A few months before, he had defended Franklin in the bitter experience of his examination over the Hutchinson letters. There was Temple Luttrell, who was brother of that Colonel Luttrell whom Parliament favored for Middlesex against John Wilkes and who was, moreover, brother-

in-law of the Duke of Gloucester, who was brother of the King. There was David Hartley, the warm friend of Franklin, whose proposal for conciliation with America was a more moderate one than Chatham's or Burke's, and equally unsuccessful.

Eclipsing the other brilliant leaders of the Commons were Burke and Fox, of whom history has told so much that there is no need for recapitulation. But Josiah Quincy had the opportunity to sit in the gallery and hear Burke's great Ciceronian periods roll out, enriched by his strong Irish brogue; heard the torrent of epithets, metaphors, and comparisons go pouring over and around his subject; saw his blue eyes flashing and his awkward gestures growing more and more excited as he swept to his conclusion. Young members had a way of shuffling their feet or of walking out noisily when Burke launched on a controversial subject, yet even they were forced to admit that his vast sweep of eloquence often carried them away, reluctant but agreeing, by the force of its mighty torrent. But there was no piling up of periods and arguments when Charles James Fox spoke. He could be, apparently, completely inattentive to everything that was going on about him, conversing with his friends or going up and down in the House through speech after speech. Then he would get up and trace every proposal, every step of his adversaries' logic, and refute and confute them then and there. The official record of his share in the debates is always incomplete and an indirect report, since no system of shorthand or notes seemed alert enough to capture his eager, vivid, and always unrehearsed flow of eloquence.

With all the wit, the ability, and the good will of those great or those sympathetic men, there was, however, hopeless disunion. They were in opposition to the King's ministry, to the successful and complacent Tories, but their opposition could never be drawn together into a single force. Burke and Fox were devoted friends for many years of their lives, but they never could ally themselves with a common policy. Each one's political life was his own per-

sonal career and was pursued to that end. There were the Rockingham Whigs, of whom Burke was one; there were the Shelburne Whigs, the men beginning to organize behind a new name when they had seen plainly that the career of the great elder Pitt was nearing its end. There were, besides, the Bedford Whigs, who hated America and so weakened further the ranks of the opposition. They sat, for the most part, as did their Tory antagonists, for safe districts, for pocket boroughs, for family seats and hereditary representation. When Benjamin Franklin was called to interview Lord Hyde to discuss colonial affairs, that august friend of the King's ministry observed firmly that there were great numbers of Englishmen who had no representation in Parliament, so why should America complain? Franklin thought this was scarcely a logical argument but was wise enough not to enter upon expostulation.

Ordinarily a new Parliament was not to have been called until 1775, but the King, for his own reasons, had hastened matters and brought this one into being while he and his ministers still had sufficient control, and before the effects of the Association for Nonintercourse could be too deeply felt in England. The new body, in spite of the plea of John Jay for the British people to furnish a Parliament "of wisdom, independence, and public spirit," did not differ much from the last one. It returned to office, a huge, rickety, illogical, and anachronistic machine, lumbering its way forward toward that inevitable moment when the progress of liberal thinking would catch up with it and control would pass out of the hands of privilege forever. But there were still many years to wait for that, and Americans were impatient people.

It was before this body, therefore, with a firm majority for the administration already bought and paid for, that the Petition to the King was laid. There had been much delay; an accident had happened to the first document and time had to pass before a duplicate could be put in the hands of the colonial agents. The

instructions sent with the paper were that as soon as it had been presented to the King it was to be published in the press so that all England could know what was the moderation of the plea of the American Congress. The paper was accompanied by a vote of thanks from the Congress to "those truly noble, honorable, and patriotic advocates of civil and religious liberty," who had upheld the cause of America.

Franklin, into whose hands it was committed, held a conference with the other agents, some of whom, including Edmund Burke, who was agent for New York, declined having anything to do with the matter. They declared that they had received no instructions on the subject from their own colonies. One of them, Wentworth, said that the petition took "a very high tone, with offensive expressions." In the end Franklin took it, alone, to Lord Dartmouth, but went to him five times before he was given any audience. Dartmouth finally accepted it, although it had been announced earlier that no paper from the Congress could be received, since that was an illegal body. He now admitted that it was "a decent and proper petition" and undertook to lay it before the King. George III "received it very graciously," so Dartmouth told the agents, but considered that the matters in it were of such importance he must put it before Parliament before making a reply.

It was brought before that body on January nineteenth, 1775, with Josiah in the visitors' gallery. But added to it was a great collection of minor petitions, trade reports, pamphlets, and handbills, a hundred and forty-nine items, all offered together as the American Papers. Although Lord Chatham had seen the petition and called it a composition "decent, manly, and properly expressed," very few of the members of Parliament, even those interested, had found any opportunity of reading it. Vote was taken to consider the papers, "as a whole . . . this day se'n-night," but when discussion came up on January twenty-sixth there was still a dodging of the issue, a refusal of special consid-

eration for the petition from the Congress. Charles James Fox was in his most bitter vein, rising to abuse Lord North with such violence that he was again and again ordered to sit down, and getting up again and again to repeat the same words. He finally dropped his charges of "unexampled treachery and falsehood" on the part of "the most noble Lord," and offered only a comment on his "negligence, incapacity, and inconsistency." Burke spoke early and with emphasis on the national ruin which the ministry was bringing upon the country by their policy in America; when he tried to give his opinion again, the House grew so clamorous that he was shouted down. Not even the petition from the Merchants of London, since it was known to be on behalf of America, was allowed proper consideration. Late in the evening, a proposal was made by Sir George Savile that the colonial agents be heard in support of the petition from America. The House majority, whipped up to its proper duty by this time, refused to hear them.

The American petition fared no better in the House of Lords, where all attention, even that of Franklin and Josiah Quincy, was now focused upon the fact that the great Earl of Chatham had come out of retirement and was preparing to speak for America. On the occasion of his first great address, Franklin was there by Chatham's own arrangement, but Josiah had found a place in the gallery also.

"He rose like Marcellus," Josiah recorded, thrilled with the knowledge that here was one of England's greatest men about to offer his opinion on one of England's gravest issues. Neither the state of his health nor the crisis of colonial affairs would suffer him to make delay; on both accounts it might soon be too late. The speech he made, over which he had been in consultation with Franklin, was carefully reported by Josiah in his journal. The powerful dignity of the great man's presence, his confidence, his fire, his deep conviction, were all unforgettable. Yet it was neither awe nor wonder that Quincy felt the most, but pity at



the sight of that drawn face, that erect, gaunt figure, once the terror of all England's enemies on the Continent, now enfeebled and politically disregarded even though the same spirit was still there and the same courage. "I will knock at your gates for justice without ceasing unless inveterate infirmities stay my hand." One glance at that shattered giant made it clear that more even than inveterate infirmity was close upon him.

He was daring even to commend the American Congress so recently sitting at Philadelphia.

"They chose delegates by their free suffrage, no bribery, no *corruption*, no *influence* here, my Lords." And here was his timeless praise of the opinions they had so ably set forth. "For singular moderation, for solid wisdom, manly spirit, sublime sentiments, and simplicity of language, for everything respectable and honorable, the Congress of Philadelphia shines unrivaled."

He denounced accusingly the action of the King's ministers who had just laid before both Houses of Parliament that mass of papers which, for five or six weeks, they had been "carrying in their pockets," especially the petition of the Congress of which even Lord North had spoken as knowing the contents only by hearsay. He swept onward, his vast audience—for never had the House of Lords or the visitors' gallery been so thronged—hanging on every word. But the bound majority of the ministerial party sat sullen, obstinate, and unmoved, even by his solemn warning, "His Majesty may indeed wear his crown; but, (with) the American jewel out of it, it will not be worth the wearing."

And what was the result? The man who had so recently seen England through the crisis of one of her most perilous European wars was pleading for so small a matter as withdrawing the British troops from America while negotiations were pending. It availed no more, Franklin recorded, "than the whistling of the winds." Sixteen Scotch peers and twenty-four bishops were a solid backbone of majority, along with "all the Lords in pos-

session or expectation of places." Chatham's motion was discarded without even a division. He was thrust aside, so Franklin commented bitterly, as though his motion were a "ballad offered by a drunken porter." But when Americans think of England and our earlier relations with her, it were well to remember always that great day when Chatham spoke for us.

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## CHAPTER VI

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### *The Friends of America— The Lords*

LORD CHATHAM'S motion, in that speech of January twentieth, 1775, was specifically for the withdrawal of the British troops as a preliminary to consultation over American grievances. Not all of his old followers supported him on that occasion, but it was possible to see from their action who were the bravest and most able. Lord Shelburne got up quickly to support the motion and to express his own belief that all which Chatham had offered was of "wisdom, justice, and propriety." His indictment of Parliament and the method of the King's ministry in relation to America was unwontedly bitter. "Let us hear no more of the People, Parliament, or Great Britain, but consider the issue . . . as between the administration on one side and all America on the other."

Shelburne, as Josiah Quincy was to learn from Dr. Franklin, was at the moment the most important man of the Whig party, the close and devoted friend of Chatham, as the others were not, and the obvious heir to Chatham's political power. He was, so Josiah came to know from Shelburne himself and from others, a self-made man in a most unusual way. From birth he had been surrounded by wealth, by estates and titles, but growing up in the rackets household of his grandfather, the Irish Earl of Kerry, he had long been so neglected by an indifferent family and a succession of delinquent tutors that, so he declared later, he would not even have learned to read or write had it not been for the insistence of his aunt, herself unhappily married to a

titled *ignoramus*. With unstinted effort, made effective by the boy's own ambitions, she saw to it that he got the necessary education at home, was sent to school and college, was encouraged in his just purposes and in his own confidence in his political destiny. At this date he was living on his cherished estate of Bowwood, near Bath. Shelburne was not only warm in his support of the rights of Americans, but he was untiring, speaking on every occasion until at last there was no use in speaking more. He was a man clear, direct, and approachable, with a head for business as well as for politics. On hearing of Josiah's arrival in London, he invited him to a conference and conceived a warm regard for this young, unknown emissary from Massachusetts.

What was admitted to be one of the best legal minds in England was brought to the question by Lord Camden, once Counsellor Charles Pratt, but now raised to the peerage as Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas. He was perhaps the boldest advocate for America, as he was bold in all his decisions. He and Dunning, the chief legal authority in the Commons, continued to denounce as unconstitutional the ill-advised measures of the King's government.

The bishops sat in a solemn phalanx and voted for the King, with two exceptions. Jonathan Shipley, the Bishop of St. Asaph's, warm friend of Franklin, preached and wrote for the cause of the colonies. On account of his great abilities he had been talked of as the next Archbishop of Canterbury, but with his advocacy of justice to America in sermons and publications he lost that possible opportunity forever. He was Benjamin Franklin's closest friend in England and it was at his house at Twyford that the first section of the great *Autobiography* was written.

Only one other bishop stood on the same side, Frederick Keppel, Bishop of Exeter. He joined with his brother, Admiral Lord Keppel, who was so staunch in his views that it brought him temporary ruin. Lord Keppel had been in Virginia with General

Braddock and had witnessed something of that ill-starred commander's haughty manner to the American gentlemen who sought to make him welcome. Keppel refused all commands which would bring him service against the colonists. One of Chatham's warnings, of "foreign war hanging over you by a slight but bitter thread," was presently to materialize when, as Chatham further foretold, France and Spain, who "are watching for the maturity of your errors," concluded that the time was ripe and entered into war with England. Then Keppel threw himself into the defense of his country, but he had by that time incurred such great enmity of the Admiralty Office that he was finally court-martialed for neglect of duty in an engagement with the French. His trial at Portsmouth was on the day that Parliament opened in January of 1779, but the benches were empty, since everyone had gone to listen to Keppel's defense. The brief for it had been drawn by Edmund Burke. Keppel's triumphant acquittal was to indicate the first turning of that tide which, after years of unsuccessful war, began to set against the King's group of ministers.

Lord Effingham was another who would not serve in a cause which he thought was unjust, rising in Parliament to declare that, though his military career meant more to him than anything else in life, he was resigning his commission rather than take up arms against America. Sir Jeffrey Amherst was offered a peerage and any further honor he would like to name if he would take the chief command of the troops in America, but he refused.

The very first time Josiah had sat in the visitors' gallery of either House he found, surprisingly, that he was being directly referred to, and in no flattering terms. On November thirtieth the King had delivered his Speech from the Throne to the House of Lords, and debate followed as the answering Address to the King was being considered. The Earl of Hillsborough, former Secretary of State for the colonies and wholly inimical to them, rose to thank the Throne and to express "his abhorrence and

detestation of the daring spirit of resistance in Massachusetts." He declared also that "there were then men walking in the streets of London who ought to be in Newgate or at Tyburn," while he bent his withering eye upon the place where Franklin and his young friend were sitting. Josiah thrilled to the fact that Hillsborough had spoken in the plural and that he was coupled with his much admired friend as the object of the Lord's disapproval.

The Marquis of Rockingham took his part in the debate on Chatham's motion, an important figure around whom a group of Whigs was beginning to congregate. He was young-looking, slim and graceful, with fine-drawn good looks and a suggestion of frailty. Wholeheartedly for America, his speech was temperate and reasonable. Although Edmund Burke was long his secretary, that man's overpowering force and fashion of oratory never invaded his patron's speeches; Rockingham evidently did not lean upon him for the contents of his public addresses, since both opinion and words were strikingly his own.

The Duke of Richmond further took up the cudgels for the King's subjects in America concerning whom His Majesty's speech had offered such strictures. He proposed to amend the royal address, so that instead of advocating forcible measures it would read, "to secure the harmony and happiness of all His Majesty's dominions." Harmony and happiness were not just what the King's ministry were prescribing for colonies that were defying the mother country, and the amendment was voted down. The men who were for the King's measures—Sandwich, Mansfield, Gower, and Lyttelton—were strong of argument, bitter, violent, abusive, and confident; yet the real strength of the administration was in that firm majority which had given its allegiance for a due consideration and was not to be shaken by any mere oratory or honest conviction. As Shelburne said, "Let us hear no more of the People."

Josiah Quincy's visits to Parliament were not his only means of learning who were and who were not on the side which he had

come so far to assist. One would have thought that a young lawyer, even of such brilliant promise, whose legal reputation had penetrated little beyond his own town, would have been an object of small interest to the mighty figures of the British government. But there was a teeming curiosity on the part of the ministry concerning all things American and a hope in every august heart that somewhere, somehow, could be found the means of bringing America, not to a reconciliation, but to a capitulation. Around Benjamin Franklin had grown up the not surprising legend that he had powers of concession and compromise which, if he could only be persuaded to exercise them, would solve all the riddles of what was to be done. More than one person, on behalf of the ministry, sought out Franklin and entered into long conversations with him, trying to plumb the depths of those possible powers. Unfortunately, those officials who undertook to treat with Franklin, by pure force of habitual method, always gravitated to the same question: what would Franklin reckon as a proper reward for his services once reconciliation was satisfactorily arranged? Franklin observed to his friend Dr. Fothergill that they "would rather give me a place in a cart to Tyburn than any other place whatever." Finally, when the Petition to the King arrived, he took his stand behind it, saying here was the statement of the Congress; beyond this he had no powers, and no compromises to make.

Something of the same sense of political virtue seemed to be attributed to Josiah, perhaps because no person in the ministry could understand his coming, of his own free will, to give his good offices to the cause so near his heart. Certain it is that redoubtable personages took note of him at once, and he had not been in London two days before he was invited to a conference with Lord North. The young American ingenuously believed that the Prime Minister had sent for him to get information about America, and gave his ideas freely and with confidence, but realized presently that North had actually summoned him to

hear his own views. "His Lordship several times smiled, and once seemed touched," Josiah recorded of the interview, but "His Lordship's propensity to converse" presently gave Josiah little time to present his own side. The power of Britain and her authority in America was mentioned significantly often, but only in the most friendly manner. That same day he received an invitation to dine with Mr. Corbin Morris, a gentleman whom he was to hear from and to see often. Less than a week later he saw Lord Dartmouth, but little passed between them except polite talk of a purely exploratory kind.

With Franklin, who was an old friend of his father's, Josiah was completely delighted, and capitulated at once to the older man's wit, charm, and deep wisdom. So thankless had been Benjamin Franklin's task of representing America in a field where the powers that be were determined there should be no representation, that his visible results had been small. Murmurs had arisen on the other side of the Atlantic expressing doubts of his loyalty to his mission, so that one of Josiah's less well-defined errands was to satisfy his colony on the score of Franklin's integrity. Any doubts he may have had himself did not survive their first interview, and he wrote home emphatically that "Dr. Franklin is an American in heart and soul."

Franklin, on his part, seemed to welcome the newcomer from America like a breath of clean air in the atmosphere of intrigue and political expediency which had been about him for so long. He sent Quincy the rounds of his own friends, and from that circle the young man went on to acquaintances of his own, political, literary, and purely personal. But he always came back to Franklin as the best and most valued friend of all, and put down in his journal with more pleasure the record, "dined with Dr. Franklin and spent the evening alone," than any of the accounts of splendid invitations or interesting interviews.

Arthur Lee, brother of the merchant and alderman, William Lee, brother also of Richard Henry who sat for Virginia in the



first Congress, was Franklin's colleague, being his deputy as agent for the colonies. Even as early as this, differences had arisen between them which later, in France, were to emerge into open enmity. But they had this in common—both found Quincy delightful, and Lee carried him away to introduce him to his own friends. There were many who liked him, many who were interested in him, many who wished to discuss with him the affairs of America. With one voice they warned him against the "temptations and bribery of the administration." "If you are corruptible, sir, the ministry will corrupt you," one told him at once on hearing that he was to dine with Mr. Corbin Morris.

He learned that this Mr. Morris was a commissioner of the customs, an innocuous enough office, but that he was also supposed to be the chief framer of the annual ministerial budget and to be a strong friend of the ministry. But personally Josiah found him a man "sensible, intelligent, and very conversable" for the earlier part of their intercourse, the conversation turning in the most general way upon America, her needs and her rights. It became evident, however, little by little, that this was the gentleman selected as the vehicle for the ministerial method with Josiah Quincy. A visit, a dinner or two, more visits, flattery, probing of the young man's ideas and principles, and Morris finally approached the point. Quincy had now had opportunity to observe the state of political affairs, he said; it must be plain to him that the ministry was strongly inclined to "mildness and lenity" in regard to the colonies' complaints. On the other hand he must realize by now that "no power in Europe ever provoked or bade defiance to the power of this island but they were made to repent of it." Quincy should acquaint his friends at home of these undeniable facts; his influence with them must be great and his services in such an undertaking would be most valuable. It was Josiah's inner comment, later confided to his journal, that "I observed a remarkable conformity of sentiment between him and Lord North, and an equally observable similarity of language."

But having thrown out this feeler, Morris pressed the matter no further at that moment, and left Josiah to digest the hints and the praise of his influence and understanding—which the young American characterized as “flummery.”

Two weeks passed and Corbin Morris returned to his subtle task. He suggested that there would be great advantage in waiting on Lord North and Lord Dartmouth once more; it would be a very proper and expedient step. “I thought I could discern the origin and drift of this curious discourse,” Quincy wrote in his journal that evening. He did not put down just what vague outline of a proper reward was dangled before his eyes nor what were the terms of his refusal. That he was emphatic cannot be doubted, for Corbin Morris entered the pages of the journal no more.

But the ministry was not done with him. If the fact of corruption could not be achieved, the reputation for it would serve just as well. Friends told him, he reported home, that “Lord North has given out that I have my price.” It concerned Josiah Quincy not at all, until rumors began to be so rife that he wrote in some anxiety to his wife, “If you hear of any honorable and advantageous offers to induce my settlement in this island, don’t be concerned. My heart and happiness . . . are bound up in America.”

Not all of his associations, however, were embittered by such attempted corruption and chicanery. Josiah Quincy was one of those persons who have a talent for friendship, and never before had there been so full and rich an opportunity to exercise it. He made acquaintance very soon with the brothers Dilly, publishers and booksellers in the Poultry, deeply interested in the importing of American books. With them he could share his enthusiasm over the *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania*. Their bookshop was an established meeting place for authors, and their hospitable table embraced a vast and varied number of guests, from the Duke of Cumberland—the King’s brother—

and Dr. Samuel Johnson, to John Wilkes. Johnson was prone, at this time, "to cast out all his nets" conversationally, to learn what was the general opinion of his latest work, a pamphlet entitled *Taxation no Tyranny*, a stately and heavily worded piece of writing, very convincing to those who already believed as he did. It was presently answered by another called *Resistance no Rebellion*.

He met also Mr. Thomas Brand Hollis, benefactor of Harvard College, whose interest, unlike the Dillys', was to send reading matter to America for the edification of thinking men. He presented Quincy with many books and pamphlets to take home to his friends. Josiah met Mr. Cruger, the American-born member of the Commons from Bristol, a rough-spoken fellow who reflected, in his own courageous stand in Parliament, the fact that the merchants of Bristol were deeply in sympathy with the colonies' commercial grievances. He met Hugh Baillie, "a Scotch gentleman of very liberal sentiments and a most zealous partisan of America." Franklin also saw that he met Dr. Priestley, for whom he had such great regard, a gentleman of great learning who had taken orders in the Church but who became librarian and counselor to Lord Shelburne in the gathering of his famous collections. He met Alderman Sawbridge, as he was to meet later his sister, the idealistic and liberal Mrs. Macaulay. Sawbridge was a member of Parliament of whom American history should take special note, since he appears significantly in our story again. He was a man with coarse features but with a keen and satiric tongue and unparalleled stoutness and honesty of heart. Josiah met David Hartley, another member of Parliament who was Franklin's close friend.

He was invited to spend Christmas along with Franklin at the Bishop of St. Asaph's, at Twyford, but he kept Christmas instead at Wanstead, with a new friend, Mr. Vaughan and, immediately after, since Parliament was doing nothing until after the

holidays, he set off from London with Arthur Lee and Jonathan Williams, Franklin's young relative, for a tour to Bath.

There he finally made the acquaintance of the much talked-of Mrs. Macaulay, whom the Dilly brothers so admired and whose works they published, an able woman whose vigorous pen did justice to America. But the most notable incident of the stay in Bath was his meeting Colonel Isaac Barré, recuperating from an attack of "gout of the stomach," and his interesting communion with that energetic, fiery, and completely unillusioned mind. Together they observed the antiquities of the ancient Roman Empire and discussed at great length King George's method of government, already marching to its ultimate fall. After exploring all that Bath offered him, he set out for his unforgettable visit to Lord Shelburne at Bow-wood, the highest point of all his stimulating and enlightening experiences in England. Two days he spent there, seeing the farms, the sheep, the magnificent house, the cherished library, and saw the care with which Shelburne was superintending the education of his two small, motherless sons. He returned to London with much food for thought and a greater understanding of that crisis in English government in which a certain group of ministers and a certain obstinate example of kingly personality were, as Chatham said of them, "maturing their errors." But it was also given to Josiah to know, extraordinarily and briefly, so large a number of those who were maturing England's true wisdom and her innate impulse for liberty.

Among those of Franklin's friends with whom he had slight acquaintance at first, and then the warmest friendship of all, was Dr. Fothergill. He was a Scot, a Quaker, and a man who had, through all his active life, a burning interest in America. No Quaker coming abroad for one of those spiritual visits which are part of the system of life for the Friends, failed to know and to get great comfort from the immediate interest of John Fothergill or to hear Fothergill's earnest views on the political position of Quakers in Pennsylvania. No young man coming from Phila-

delphia to study medicine in England or Scotland seemed to escape his eye or his warmhearted patronage. It was he who selected young Dr. Shippen for a special purpose. Writing to his Quaker friends in Pennsylvania, Fothergill insisted that the College of Philadelphia, in which Franklin had such interest, should have a medical school of which Shippen should be the head. Once the school was under way it was his particular and cherished interest. He was constantly sending books, drugs, anatomical specimens, and a boundless stream of advice. He was so much in demand in London as medical practitioner among the well-to-do and the influential, that he knew, as few other men did, the tenor of opinion among the really powerful in the land and offered to Franklin his honest belief that "whatever specious pretences" the government offered, "they are all hollow," and no man was to be deceived thereby. It echoed the advice Josiah had received: "Beware of the arts of negotiators, the ministry are adept in them."

Fothergill had made note of Josiah Quincy in his busy life, but did not come to intimate acquaintance with him until disaster rendered necessary the help he was always so ready to give. Josiah had set out on his voyage with the seeds of desperate illness within him, set out the more eagerly because he wished to "do some good" while there was yet a little time. For a certain period the change of climate, the stimulating scene, the happiness of making new friends, all benefitted him greatly, and health and strength seemed to rise up to meet his earnest demands. For two months he could go anywhere, accept any invitation, could spend long hours over his letters home and his journal. But immediately after the great scene in the House of Lords when he listened to Chatham's speech and made his hasty notes, he worked all night to transcribe them and put on record his memory of that splendid occasion. Three days later he sat through the long debate in the Commons on American affairs and on the Petition for America from the Merchants of London. He listened, spellbound, as he always did, to Burke, Fox, Townsend, and Sawbridge, to Lord

North and Lord Stanley, and heard the vote—eighty-two for considering the petition, with a hundred and ninety-seven against it.

Since the arrival of the news of the Association for Nonintercourse, merchants' petitions had been pouring in from London, from Bristol, from Glasgow, from Norwich. At first, all of them called for reconciliation. Finally one arrived from Birmingham, demanding that Parliament do its utmost "to support the authority of the laws of this Kingdom." Burke called it "a warlike, bloodthirsty" document, and upon its being followed soon after by similar papers, all of suspiciously uniform style and wording, it became plain that such petitions were being bought by the ministry, many times in the same towns which had earlier sent their real and voluntary pleas that America receive just treatment.

After the long debate, after the final vote, Josiah made up his mind that "if King, Lords, and Commons can subdue America into bondage against the almost universal sentiment, opinion, wish, and hope of the Englishmen of this island, the deed will be done."

Here was a just summary, the last of his political comments, the one by which we should best remember him. It was the truth about England of that day, where a small group—King, a few Lords, a few Commons—got the upper hand and gave to posterity one more example of the errors into which such illiberal government can fall.

Josiah was taken very ill that night, with all the distressing symptoms which had been in abeyance for a brief stretch of weeks. Dr. Fothergill came to see him and firmly refused to take any fee.

"I consider this is a public cause to which we must all contribute," was his pronouncement. What young Josiah had contributed was not to be measured in two-guinea fees. Jonathan Williams, Franklin's relative, watched by his bedside the next

night, after which Fothergill ordered Quincy out of London and to Islington, to the house of Mr. Bromfield, the English uncle of Josiah's wife. Here he was to have complete rest and good care.

He was overwhelmed by visits, letters, messages, friendly interest, and attention from every quarter. Franklin, Dr. Price, Dr. Priestley, the Lees, came as a matter of course. Sawbridge visited him, and others, many of whom he had never met, sent messages and inquired about his recovery. In this pleasant atmosphere strength began to return, but he was never to come back to his old activities. And here, in his retirement, he received final report of the summit of Parliamentary action, the crucial decision which was to set in motion the great march toward liberty.

On February first Lord Chatham delivered his second speech and offered his supplementary motion, "a Provisional Act for settling the troubles in America." Chatham was already a defeated man, and his bill came to nothing, except for a final item in the historical record that one of England's greatest prime ministers took the side of America. By far the most important occasion was that of February second, when Lord North stood up in the Commons to propose an address to the King, asking His Majesty to declare the Colony of Massachusetts Bay "in a state of rebellion," to be coerced by military force.

No outsider witnessed those debates, for the doors of both Houses were locked against visitors, but member after member brought to Quincy his story and his notes of what had occurred. Josiah could picture it all easily enough; every person concerned he had seen in action, he knew every detail of the room—the hot, flaring candles, the long benches, the rows of faces, some distraught, excited beyond any crisis that had come before, some drearily patient, merely waiting to deliver the vote which had been promised in exchange for ministerial patronage.

Burke, suffering and indisposed, spoke more briefly than usual, but with the wild fire of a man who sees peril to his country of the most desperate kind. He declared this to be a moment of

the greatest crisis in England's fate, described the abyss into which the nation was about to be plunged by the folly of her rulers, and urged those who had regard for England's real welfare to rouse themselves to the realization of what this proposal meant.

John Wilkes went further. He recapitulated those often rehearsed arguments over the right to tax the colonies; then, with a rising note of warning, he proclaimed his fantastic—and completely true—admonition.

"Who can tell, sir, whether in consequence of this day's violent and mad address to His Majesty, the scabbard may not be thrown away by them as well as by us, and, should success attend them, whether in a few years the independent Americans may not celebrate the glorious era of the Revolution of 1775 as we do that of 1688."

The contest ebbed and flowed. A Colonel Grant, speaking on the ministers' side, averred that he had been in America and could solemnly declare that he knew Americans well and that they would never face a British army. Charles Fox, elusive as usual, could not be reported save as speaking in his highest vein of eloquence and power. He boldly moved the amendment which would reverse the meaning of Lord North's proposed address to the King. But the ministry knew its advantage, knew that its majority against these few courageous ones was almost three to one, and went stubbornly on. It was Isaac Barré whose warning came nearly at the end of the debate. He declared bluntly that Parliament this night must decide whether England was to make war, not only on Massachusetts, but on all her American colonies, and that this would be, further, a certain step toward incurring foreign war. In such a contest, he warned, "England could never vanquish." The very last speaker was the stout alderman of London, Sawbridge. He stated first that the colony was not in a state of rebellion, secondly that he, for his part, was totally unwilling to promise, as a loyal subject, to risk his life and fortune in sup-



port of any such measure, and so he would have none of it. The bill was brought in at midnight and Lord North's proposal passed.

In the House of Lords the struggle over the same question was even more bitter. Seldom has the record shown more furious and uncontrolled enmity of debate. Every jealousy, every smarting sense of injustice, every acrimonious accusation, found words in hot and personal attack. Lord Mansfield, the Chief Justice, rising in great passion, openly accused Lord Shelburne of falsehood and was, in his turn, as vehemently charged with lying. The original responsibility for the oppressive laws of which America complained was thrown in the faces of those who had long since disowned them. A bishop rose to soothe the troubled waters, but, since he could not hide the fact that he was voting with the ministry for war, his benign influence was swept aside in the torrents of invective. Because of the very confusion of furious controversy it was possible to hurry the bill to a vote and pass it. The only true record of those who defended America is in the list of the dissentients, the "Noncontents" who signed a written protest that "the Lords were not given a moment's time for deliberation before they were driven headlong into a declaration of civil war."

The signed protest of the dissentients calls the roll of those Lords who were for proper justice: Abingdon, Archer, Camden, Cholmondeley, Craven, Devonshire, Effingham, Fitzwilliam, Ponsonby, Portland, Richmond, Rockingham, Stanhope, Tankerville, Torrington, and Wycombe—who was Shelburne.

For all thinking persons this was the end of hope. Other great moments were to come later, but they were aftermath. The first fruit of the new policy was the move of the British troops to Lexington and Concord. Burke's bold speech on conciliation was presented on March twenty-second, but even if it had been approved, news of conciliatory measures would have come too late. Hartley's followed in a few days, but neither plan for reconcilia-

tion had a moment's chance with the Commons. And after Lexington and Concord, after the deadly sharpshooting on one side and the burning and destruction on the other, there was little chance of going back.

Franklin and Quincy knew that their friends planned still to fight their battles. Burke, so it is reported, had consulted Franklin in the matter of his coming speech as Chatham had done. But both the Americans knew that an irrevocable step had been taken. Dr. Franklin was packing to return to America. Josiah Quincy's friends advised him, in a body, to go also. The messages and the information which they wished him to carry back to Massachusetts and to America were such as could only be taken in person. Letters must always be indirect and enigmatic and unsigned, so thoroughly were all of them searched out and read by the agents of the ministry. Even a journal was subject to capture, so that verbal statements alone could be true and complete. Josiah had written home much that was of value, but that which he could report with the authority of names and direct quotation behind it would go much further. "Lord Shelburne told me thus and thus—Sir George Savile advises thus—I saw Lord North and the Earl of Dartmouth and under their suavity I could see—Lord Camden, in the House of Lords said, 'Were I an American I would resist to the last drop of my blood.' "

The whole burden of that message which his friends wished him to carry to America had one theme—"Unite." See how little we can do, they told him, even though we have, like you, a great concept of the liberties of Englishmen. See how we are divided among ourselves, how old political usage, old quarrels, old party separations, keep us from joining on a single issue. "Division among the friends of liberty is the curse of the land." But America is not so bound, she needs only union, courage, and perseverance—above all she needs union.

Josiah's own instinct was to put off the stormy winter voyage until his health was more fully mended. Doctor Fothergill looked

upon the plan of departure with the gravest misgivings. But neither of them could fail to see that Josiah's time was growing perilously short, not his time in England but his time on earth. He set sail, accordingly, March sixteenth, 1775, while Franklin made ready to follow immediately. The discomforts of the ship were beyond anything which Quincy had been led to expect; the delay from head winds was very great. Toward the end of April the vessel lay off the shores of Massachusetts for six days, unable to come into port and with Josiah lying in his cabin in the last extremity of his illness. He died within sight of the shore of Cape Ann, on April twenty-sixth. Lexington and Concord had been fought; the issue was open at last and the contest had been joined. But of that he did not know.

"If only I could have one interview with Samuel Adams or with Joseph Warren," he kept saying when once he saw that the hardships of the voyage were more than his broken strength could surmount. Yet he had accomplished more than he knew, for the real import of his information had gone ahead of him in his letters, had been embodied in his talks with Franklin, was to come to America in that host of unsigned missives from his friends which are the record of that time when thinking England, honest England, just England, was all behind us.

And he, in his turn, had brought to the friends of liberty in Britain a glimpse of the buoyancy, the hope, the enthusiasm, that a new country was to offer in a new and great issue. "His coming over has been of great service to our cause," Franklin wrote to Josiah's father. Josiah Quincy represented the able augury of how friends from opposite sides of the Atlantic could agree when once they had political principles in common. He had the great privilege of being an observer at one of the most vital moments in the advance of true liberty.

Statesmen with the greatest minds had hammered out, in those debates in the halls of Parliament, the truths of what freedom could demand and what it could not, where government could

exert its authority and where the true rights of man could bid it go no farther. Not only for dwellers on the Island of Britain, but for all Englishmen, these men declared, should be that right of freedom from taxation except by consent, "which Hampden obtained for us," the rights of private property, of free meeting and free speech, and that principle voiced by Burke that a civil government that has to support itself by force ceases to exist.

Moreover, statesmen had seen clearly what had been no more than a secret thought in America, but what John Wilkes stated so bluntly—that the inevitable end of the present British policy would be independence of the colonies and permanent separation from the mother country. Every word of those hot and defiant debates must be counted as preliminary to the further deliberations of another body, the young, vigorous, unprejudiced Congress, honestly elected and not yet bound by tradition. Those friends in England were content that it should be so. Horace Walpole, little prone to sentimental emotion, with few illusions and still with a great wisdom, voiced the belief of true Englishmen when he wrote down, in dejection and solitude at Strawberry Hill:

"I saw no chance of a free spirit arising, unless in America. . . ."

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## CHAPTER VII

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### *Commander-in-Chief*

UNLESS Parliament, in response to the petition and under pressure from the threat of the Association for Nonintercourse, should offer a redress of grievances, the Congress was scheduled to sit again the tenth of the next May. There was, therefore, no question of the necessity of their meeting in their second session, in May of 1775. As the day approached, travelers from New England began to take their way southward, but through a scene very different from that which had greeted them a year ago. They had been met before, outside the various towns, and escorted forward by friendly and enthusiastic citizens who might otherwise, in their overflowing spirits, have turned their energies to less admirable demonstrations than forming processions and cheering their congressmen. Now the whole aspect of the citizenry had changed. Troops of newly enlisted soldiers, inexperienced still at sloping arms and keeping in perfect alignment, were, nonetheless, ready to give an exhibition of such martial proficiency as their sweating drill masters had managed to instill into them. Fifes and drums sounded the welcome and acclaim that ragged, friendly cheers had afforded earlier. As the delegates from Massachusetts moved south, joined as before by those of Connecticut and then of New York, the escort grew larger and larger, the uniforms smarter and more complete, the skill in presenting arms noticeably more perfect. It had not been necessary to teach much of this new army to shoot or how to carry a rifle, but it was difficult for them to learn to wheel, to advance, to form files and echelons without entanglement. In the northern villages, many towns still owned as public domain the wide strip of green

which lay between the road and the footway, long ago put aside for space for the practice of the train bands. The old use had come back and the rich spring grass was wearing short under the tramp of awkward and determined feet. The serious faces lighted and the dusty throats shouted with ardor as the Philadelphia-bound travelers went by.

Colonial America was a different place now. The colonies once declared by the King to be in a state of rebellion were diligent to see to it that His Majesty should not have made a misstatement. The Association for Nonintercourse had not, somehow, had the expected effect upon England, no more than had the closing of the port of Boston produced the looked-for results. With the battle of Lexington and Concord all hopes that recourse to arms could be wholly avoided had now gone glimmering, but the hope for reconciliation with England had not gone with it. There was still firm and general belief that something could be thought of, that some way could be found. The men who really knew what was the inevitable way were bound to keep the revelation of it locked closely in their own breasts. Did they not still recollect the advice that had met them, like a dash of cold water, as they approached Philadelphia before? They remembered—but some of them at least had other plans now, and were not to be so easily silenced. John Adams set out after the others, traveling in a sulky accompanied by a mounted servant. Cushing, Paine, and Samuel Adams had gone on before, and with them now was that great fortune, the man who was one of the most important in the colony, John Hancock.

The nearer they came to Philadelphia the more interesting and stirring were the tidings that met them. Dr. Benjamin Franklin had returned from England. That was a portent of some kind, and now all men would let themselves see what it really meant. And Joseph Galloway was gone. He had refused to take part in the new Congress; instead of living up to his pledges as a signer of the Association, he had retired to the country and was sus-

pected of being ready to go over whole-heartedly to the side of the King.

The men from New England were soon to get their first sight of Franklin, who had been born amongst them but who had gone so far away. He had a worn look, a patient look, as the portrait of the day records, but in spite of his seventy years he did not appear old nor seem to feel so, although he had every reason so to do. It is often change which makes men feel the passage of time, and here were changes for him to come home to. His wife was dead, she who had had so little of real married life with him, but who so faithfully took care of all his concerns and affairs at home. The house which was built new when he went away was mellowed now with the rain and smoke and wind of seaport Philadelphia, and in it dwelt a new son-in-law and two small grandchildren whom he had never seen before. And more than that, his friends had changed.

He had had great hopes and ambitions for his son, William Franklin, easy-going, likable, raised to a great place by his father's influence. There were not many American-born royal governors and few who had come to such honors so early. Moreover, when Benjamin Franklin went away, he had thought that all those intricate political controversies in which he had taken part at the time would still be firmly upheld, with skill and acumen, by his young henchman Joseph Galloway. With the man's brilliance, his determination, and his stubborn devotion to one purpose, it seemed that he must go on in the leadership which he was so ready to assume when Franklin laid it down. But these hopes, like so many others, had been blown far away before the ominous rising wind of revolution.

Franklin journeyed out to Trevoise, Galloway's country place, to hold consultation with the two young men, and talked to them with deep persuasion. He was an old man, with ripe experience and seasoned judgment; he had, besides, had the rare opportunity of being at the very heart and center of the source of all the

trouble; he had seen every step of the advance toward an open breach. Could he not be trusted to know what was to be the outcome, what was the right course to take? He was convinced that there would be no reconciliation, that nothing would bring the King and his ministers to their senses. He had cherished the hope for a long time, but it was gone. He himself was now for independence. America must go forward, and the forward direction did not lead toward London and royal patronage. The younger men must make up their minds to turn their backs upon all that and throw in their lot with their own countrymen. Young Franklin had never been able to live on his income as governor, and every year had to borrow from his father. It was time to bring all that to an end.

The weight of experience, the force of eloquence and affection, all went for nothing. Neither of the two younger men could see the matter in any light save of its bearing on his own future. It was Galloway's firm belief that resistance to England would be madness; there was nothing but ruin for any prosperous man who espoused such a cause as that. And William Franklin could see himself in no part but that of a royal governor. No man in his senses, he thought, would abandon such a place and let himself be branded as a traitor to the King. Franklin parted with them and only once, later, made a last effort at bringing his son to reason, even if not to patriotism. He wrote a hard, harsh letter, in which he made the emphatic statement, "I think independence more honorable than any service."

But William Franklin would not see it and there was evidently no more to be said. There could be, for the good doctor, only one heavier moment, the day when the Congress gave orders that the Royal Governor of New Jersey was to be removed from office and confined. It is to be hoped that his father was not in the meeting room when that occurred, although the tidings from New Jersey came suddenly and may have caught him unawares.

He had one further sorrow to face as the Congress opened, in



the arrival of the news of the death of Josiah Quincy. His relationship with the young man had been very close, and it was hard indeed to hear that this eager spirit had not been given opportunity to carry the burden of advice and warning from the sympathizers in England, that he had not had the chance to speak one word to any friend waiting on the American side. Quincy had wanted, so he told his friends, to repair to Philadelphia and to "do what he could" there also, even though he was no member of the Congress. His services would have been great. Franklin was a person of warm affections and of great confidence in those for whom he had regard. How hard, how puzzling it always is to an elder man to see youth and brilliance swept away, to know that it was never in the scheme of things that they should have fulfillment. An old man with a very heavy heart sat quietly in his place in the State House the day that the Congress first convened. Yet that heart was still stout enough to write to his friends across the water, "There is the most perfect unanimity throughout the colonies." To his discerning mind that which they had in common was of far greater significance than that which drew them apart.

With the departure of Joseph Galloway there had come to an end any opposition to using the State House for a place of meeting. The Congress was larger now and Carpenters' Hall could scarcely have held them all. The new meeting room was of stately proportions, impressive with its tall white panels and heavily carved doorways, its crystal chandeliers with tiers of wax candles, and—oh, marvelous change!—its cushioned seats. Windsor chairs, such as Carpenters' Hall afforded, some with high backs, some with low, were as comfortable as any with wooden bottoms could actually be, but after the Congress had met from nine in the morning to five in the afternoon without intermission, they must have become seats of little ease. There was more ample table space here also. The Pennsylvania Assembly had sat comfortably two to a table, but the larger Congress could not do that.

There was, however, more room for papers and notes and quill pens and letters home, written in slack moments or during a dull session.

There were, however, few idle moments now, for there was much to be done, both directly and indirectly. Lord North's Conciliatory Motion had reached America, the system by which one colony after another might be received back into the fold if only she would agree to the merest form of control by Parliament. New Jersey received the proposal first, but all the colonial Assemblies would presently be asked to consider it. The necessity for closer union was very evident. Peyton Randolph presided over a few meetings of the new Congress, then returned to Virginia.

New England delegates had been regarded somewhat askance in the first Congress, since the weight of their majority seemed to be for bold and liberal views. But things were greatly altered now. It was a different matter to see New England openly bearing the brunt of the war, with the troops of other colonies making ready to march thither. Moreover, people felt that the very character of the representation had altered in the addition of a new member. Here now was a delegate possessed of reputation and fortune and of such settled respectability that Massachusetts was considered to have come into her own by sending Mr. John Hancock. He was not only the wealthiest man in Massachusetts, he had also just escaped capture at Concord on the night of the battle, and was placed in a bill of attainder by the British government. Congress selected him to succeed Randolph, and he was pushed into the official chair by Benjamin Harrison of Virginia, in the same manner of overcoming reluctance as was the custom in assuming the seat of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

It was true that, as Mr. Lynch of South Carolina said, there were few merchants there who did not know how to bring in goods without paying any duty. It was certain that the Hancock fortune had been reared on a system that yielded to none in that timely technique, but no one thought the worse of Hancock him-

self for that. He was not a handsome man, nor a tall, imposing one; his upper jaw was heavy for the rest of his face and his nose was thin, but he had a dignity of his own, if it was not the heavy, impersonal dignity of Randolph. Any man, moreover, who had ever acted as moderator of tumultuous town meetings knew well how to fulfill his office here. May was moving toward June, the days were getting hot, the long windows were open, and the noises of the streets came in across the sheltered yard.

When we speak of background we think of it as that by which a person can be judged and appraised. But more truly background is that to which a man's mind drifts when it is relaxed or is withdrawn from what is going on about him. Background for those sitting here together was infinitely varied, yet it was that in which every mind and heart took refuge when speeches and hours grew long, when flies buzzed at the windowpanes, when even scribbling letters and notes was too concentrated an effort. For Colonel Washington, sitting near the door and speaking so seldom, it was the thought of a white house on a summit above the broad blue Potomac, a small house with a neat, gay garden, with carefully planned and tended acres sloping down to the edge of the water. It was stretches of open woods and yellow grassed meadows where foxhounds ran, where the quarry stretched away in a tawny streak of flight, and long-limbed horses came thundering after. For Patrick Henry, sitting with his shabby wig clinging to the back of his head and his plain gray coat, it was rough, green, wooded country, where stood far more farmhouses, small and lonely, than pillared mansions. For John Jay, sitting to listen, his thin white hands on his knee, it was busy cobbled streets, counting houses, lawyers' chambers, and long tables scattered over with papers, bordered by bent heads and scribbling pens. For Thomas Mifflin it was the cool, quiet meetinghouse, with rows of bonnets on one side and broad-brimmed hats on the other, but with the still serenity faintly broken and disturbed by the

thought turning over and over in more than one mind: "May a Friend never bear arms?"

For John Adams and his cousin, for Sullivan of New Hampshire and Stephen Hopkins of Rhode Island with his twinkling eyes and his palsied, shaking hands, it was stretches of sand with cold salt breakers coming in; it was high, steep pastures with granite shouldering through; it was mountains cut as though from veined blue marble, standing against a glowing blue sky. For one at least it was the memory of a ship's deck, and a frightened, emigrant boy listening to the terms of employment by which he engaged his services in a new country. For the men of South Carolina—Lynch, Middleton, and the Rutledges—it was the busy port of Charleston, a great spread of white sail as ships came in with fortunes in the hold—no, one must remember, that was over now. And then some lengthy speech would come to an end, Charles Thomson's pen would be heard scratching in the silence, a new speaker would get up, and some sudden stirring word would break through all the languor and indifference. They would suddenly all see themselves as alike, as they really were, men with a desperate problem before them, men in the gravest danger. Even so early as this the grim jests concerning halts and gibbets went round, for were they not all declared to be in a state of rebellion, and were they not meeting here in treasonable array against their sovereign? Eliphalet Dyer, when asked why he had not come from Connecticut by water, referred cheerfully to the fact that British ships were hanging offshore to intercept coast-wise shipping and, said he, "I had rather stay a little longer before I have the honor of being hanged for my dear Country." The jests may have been somewhat gruesome, but jests they were. These were, for a great part, young men, and young men will always know how to treat portentous matters with high disrespect.

While the parties of the moderate and the violent men were slowly forming and steadily moving into more and more definite

positions of opposition, while a quartet of modest souls in the New York delegation were earning the reputation which Edward Rutledge gave them "of never quitting their chairs," there was one other person among the representatives who was scarcely more active than these four and almost as noncommittal. Yet he was not a member of the group to be ignored, even from the very first. And on the last day of his presence in Philadelphia he was so surrounded by men with business to transact with him, men to ask him for favors and men who wished to say good-by to a cherished friend, that he had not an instant to himself. And yet he managed to sit down for a moment, take up his pen, and write :

June 23, 1775. My dearest. As I am within a few minutes of leaving this City, I could not think of departing from it without dropping you a line . . . I have not time to add more as I am surrounded with Company to take leave of me. I retain an unalterable affection for you . . . Your entire G. Washington.

During the first session of the Congress, that of 1774, no one seems to have had any great knowledge or opinion of the tall, slightly awkward, interesting young colonel from Virginia. Silas Deane commented on his height and his look of spirited youth—he was forty-three years old—and then passed him by. He was not a ready man either with his tongue or his pen, so that he served on none of the committees of that 1774 Congress, most of whose business was the drawing up of documents. People have dropped casual mention of his speaking, occasionally and briefly, but have given no hint of what questions roused him from his silence. He lodged at the Slate Roof House, once the dwelling of William Penn, now Mrs. Graydon's boarding establishment. He aligned himself with no definite party, although in his careful, faithfully reasoning mind there was deep and troubled thought concerning the future. On the evening of September twenty-eighth, 1774, the night after the first serious debate on Galloway's plan—which would have been the ruin of America—Washington

came to talk to John Adams at his lodgings in Arch Street. With him came his associate from Virginia, Richard Henry Lee, and the younger Dr. Shippen. Lee lodged at the Shippens' house, for his sister, Alice Lee, was married to Dr. Shippen, Jr., the young man selected by Dr. Fothergill for heading the proposed medical school in Philadelphia.

John Adams knew and liked Dr. Shippen; he had already formed a warm acquaintance with Richard Henry Lee, whose ideas were perhaps more nearly like his own than those of any other man there. This occasion may easily have been his first intimate conversation with the young-looking and courteous colonel from Virginia.

They had dined in company together more than once, at Chief Justice Chew's, and at the elder Dr. Shippen's. When Adams had been to a Quaker meeting only last Sunday, the tall Virginian's erect head was visible among the rows of broad brims. He had taken note of George Washington in his comings and goings, but in all the press and intricacy of his own political activity, in his opposition to the moderate party and his concern over the fate of Massachusetts, he had not written the colonel very deeply upon the record of his shrewd mind. But he liked him, and even the errand upon which the Virginians had come did not trouble him. They wanted to be reassured—above all Colonel Washington wanted to be reassured. In the warm debate of the just-passed day, when Galloway's proposal of union with Britain was under discussion, certain words had been dropped that were disconcerting. They hinted at the presence of that dreaded specter, a desire for independence. Had Mr. Adams and the delegates from New England really meant that?

Adams was patient, he was cautious, and he liked George Washington's fairness and his respect for other people's opinions. He took no offense, and assured his visitors that he and his colleague-cousin, the two whose ideas were considered to contain the most dangerous tenets, had neither of them any plan for bringing

forward the possibility of independence. Adams was sure that "no one was ready for it." In dealing with Galloway and his faction, the politicians from Boston had already learned that the indirect method was the only effective one. Washington went away entirely at ease in his mind, to write later to his friend, Captain Robert MacKenzie, that when the Captain allowed himself to be told that the people of Massachusetts were for setting up independency he was "abused, grossly abused."

In spite of his silence and his apparently not being needed for any committee work in that session of 1774, George Washington attended conscientiously all of the meetings. He went seriously to dinners, balls, and assemblies, though few people record talking with him. At the end of the first Congress, other members of his delegation left early—Pendleton, Bland, and Harrison—leaving Washington to sign the Association for them. Not until after the whole work was done and the last document rolled up and dispatched did he turn his face with relief and happiness toward his beloved Mount Vernon.

When they all gathered again in May, with the new military atmosphere that pervaded all minds and thoughts, there was a little more notice taken of the Virginia colonel, but not much. He was head of a committee with Schuyler, Deane, Cushing of Massachusetts, and Hewes of North Carolina to draw up regulations for the government of the army and to estimate the amount of money the troops would need. He was chairman of two more, with Mifflin and Samuel Adams as fellow members, for providing military stores and managing a system of posts of defense for New York. He dined out less than during last September; there was less dining out in general now, for committee meetings began still at seven in the morning and were carried on late into the night after the meetings of the Congress were over. He was on intimate terms with nobody, a man who was keeping his own counsel strictly, and observing everything.

There have been few men who were so willing to learn and

who got so much out of silent observation as George Washington. Already, in those errands of hardship and humiliation, when he had been sent by the Governor of Virginia to call the French to account on the Ohio, Washington had won, in bitterness, a certain knowledge of Indian fighting, a certain knowledge of the French soldier. In that disastrous campaign when he was Braddock's aide and saw the horror of the defeat at Great Meadows, he had seen even more clearly how a British army could be helpless before rapid and unexpected attack. There was always something of the Indian fighter in Washington's tactics, his strategy of sudden advance, of daring escape, of return to the onslaught when the enemy felt himself victorious and safe.

He was learning now about the Congress. In later months and years, as he sat in his ill-warmed, badly lit, ever changing camp quarters and penned his endless letters to the governing body of the country, as he asked for ammunition and money and men and fuel, he could picture the scene of his letters as being opened and read under the wax candles; of Sherman, getting up for a long speech, standing with his left wrist clasped in his right hand; of Samuel Adams rising on his toes to emphasize the end of a sentence; of Stephen Hopkins impatient and fidgety if the letters read aloud proved too long. He would know that Richard Henry Lee, frequently his antagonist, did not use his persuasive oratory often in his behalf, that Samuel Adams, almost as chary of public speech as he himself had been, was always steadily intent on supporting his military leader. Washington learned how to challenge, reproach, insist. He reported faithfully to the Congress as to all his movements and intentions; he told them faithfully where their duty lay.

May of 1775 passed, slow and hot, into even hotter June. News from the Colony of Massachusetts indicated that the gathering of militia outside of Boston was very great and very effective; the British Army did not attempt to stir outside the city.



Nor, by the same token, did there seem any immediate hope of relieving the beleaguered town, where the hardship and the distress of the citizens was becoming great. John Adams was turning over the tidings in his mind, turning over, also, what he had come to call the "Frankford policy," based on that advice which had been thrust upon him, unasked for, on that first day of his original arrival in Pennsylvania. It could not be shaken off; he had to admit its logic, clearer after nine months than it had been even then. New York was unyieldingly conservative still, Massachusetts submerged, Pennsylvania divided and, so far, dominated by the cautious John Dickinson. Of the large colonies only Virginia was left for leadership. Putting all these matters together, adding to them what he had seen of a certain cool, clear-minded, courteous Virginian going in and out, John Adams was ready, by the middle of June, for his first great definite step.

It was time, so he told his cousin Samuel, that something was agreed upon concerning the army. Samuel Adams had his doubts, nor could he offer any suggestion of what should be done. John Adams, therefore, stood alone when, on that June morning, he got to his feet and proposed that the army facing the British lines be no longer left to the administration of the separate colonies but should be regarded as the direct responsibility of the Congress itself. Only thus could the matters of supplies, discipline, and strategy be properly administered. It was necessary to create a new office, that of commander-in-chief, and to name a man fit for so great a responsibility. Without some such unified command, he urged, there was danger that the army before Boston would dissolve. There was danger also that the British would realize the state of affairs and, should they really undertake to march out of Boston and overrun the country, there was little doubt that they would find it easy. He would make the formal motion, therefore, that Congress adopt the army and appoint a general in supreme command.

All heads were turned to him, for such a definite move had not been expected; no one but Samuel Adams knew that it was coming. Before him the countenance of President John Hancock brightened and became slightly self-conscious. When a high office was to be created, what was more natural than that he should be the man to fill it, being one of the most prominent persons in all the colonies, the man who was risking the largest fortune, hazarding the most eminent, even if not the most influential, position. The realities of war were so little recognized that Hancock was not the only one who thought that eminence of position was the basis for high military appointment. But John Adams was continuing.

It was not for him, he said, to nominate a man for the place; that must be settled after this first question was decided. But he would say frankly that in his mind there was only one man appropriate for the office, a gentleman from Virginia—

The face of Hancock underwent sudden transformation. The smile vanished; confusion and bewilderment took its place. It was one of the moments that Charles Thomson could not record, although Thomson, a silent witness of every word and movement of the Congress, was a man who never missed the enjoyment that moments of comedy could conjure up in the heart of an Irishman. One more man was moved to instant action. George Washington, sitting by the door, slipped out into the library across the hall. Mr. Samuel Adams seconded the motion to adopt the army and John Hancock's face became thunderous.

Momentous debate followed. What posterity can see with the utmost clarity is often hidden by surrounding circumstances and prejudices. The members of the Congress, though they finally achieved a unanimous vote on the adoption of the army and the appointment of a commander-in-chief, did not do so without much struggle and dissension. Thomas Johnson of Maryland, an old friend and visitor at Mount Vernon, made the actual nomination of Colonel George Washington. Objections were

withdrawn, John Hancock pulled himself together, and the choice was made. Washington himself was the only man who maintained his misgivings. In his speech of acceptance he stressed the fact that he felt he had neither experience nor ability to meet their needs. Three nights after the nomination he took up his pen to send the tidings to Martha and to give private witness to his real feelings.

My dearest. I am now set down to write you on a subject that fills me with inexpressible concern, and this concern is greatly aggravated and increased when I reflect on the uneasiness I know it will give you. . . . You may believe me, my dear Patsy, when I assure you in the most solemn manner that so far from seeking this appointment I have used every endeavour in my power to avoid it, not only from my unwillingness to part with you and the Family, but from a consciousness of its being a trust too great for my capacity . . . I shall rely, therefore, confidently on that Providence which has heretofore preserved and been bountiful to me, not doubting but that I shall return safe to you . . . I shall feel no pain from the toil and danger of the campaign. My unhappiness will flow from the uneasiness I know you will feel at being left alone. I therefore beg you to summon your whole fortitude and Resolution.

That the letter reflects the greatness of a man's concern for someone he loved and not her littleness is proven by the spirit in which Martha responded to this news. Through all the years of the war her belief and her courage did not flag; she never subscribed to the General's opinion of his incapacity; she was convinced, moreover, that he needed her. She joined him at Cambridge; she was with him at Valley Forge, sharing the discomfort of his lodgings and the agony of witnessing the sufferings of his soldiers. The lines of troops in their bivouacs would see a battered carriage with a coachman in the red and white livery of Mount Vernon, would see a small lady in a shabby dress get down at the door of the current headquarters, and would

know that Lady Washington had arrived to share their very indifferent fortunes. During the active campaigns she was at home at Mount Vernon, administering the household with a firm and able hand, so that he could always think of the place as prosperous, undamaged—waiting.

As a natural result of the Congress's organizing of the army and establishing of a schedule of pay for officers and soldiers and the purchasing of supplies, that body was immediately confronted with the serious question of finance. There was no centralized source of income; only the separate colonies had any authority to levy taxes. But some supply of money must be found, and after the Finance Committee had submitted reports, after the whole matter had been thoroughly debated, a conclusion was reached. The Congress innocently embraced that error to which inexperienced governments and inexpert financiers can so easily fall victim. They arranged to emit two million dollars in "bills of credit" for which the resources of the individual colonies were to be responsible in proportionate quotas. That this was only a faint beginning of what they would have to issue later, no one yet foresaw. They embarked on the enterprise honestly and quite unsuspectingly. It is worth noting that while Massachusetts had asked for backing to borrow a hundred thousand pounds, and the Congress had earlier authorized the Pennsylvania delegates to borrow for them six thousand pounds, the emission of government money represented Spanish milled dollars.

Meanwhile the new commander's preparations for departure were being made in haste. Appointments of officers were completed by the Congress, two major generals—Philip Schuyler, member of Congress, and Charles Lee. Eight brigadier generals were selected, among them the brother-in-law of Robert Livingston and of James Duane—Richard Montgomery. With Washington went Joseph Reed as military secretary, he who had assisted Thomson and Mifflin in calling together that first meet-

ing at the City Tavern, ancient history now. Reed had become a colonel of militia and had made acquaintance with Washington during the last term of the Congress. Washington dined with him on his final evening in Philadelphia to talk over their plans. With Washington also went Thomas Mifflin, leaving his great house and his lavish hospitality, read out of Meeting by the Friends because he had decided, once for all, that a Quaker could bear arms. Sullivan of New Hampshire, made a brigadier general the day before, was to follow immediately. The drain on the Congress had begun.

A few days before his departure a dinner was given for Washington and, on the toast being proposed to the Commander-in-Chief, the whole company rose and drank it standing in sudden, involuntary silence. On the morning of June twenty-third, in the early daylight, the street before the Slate Roof House was thronged with people waiting to see him come out. He emerged, Thomas Mifflin held his stirrup as he mounted. With him, setting out for Cambridge, were the two other generals, Schuyler and Charles Lee. A great company went out from the city to see them on their way, John Adams amongst them, all riding through the freshness of a cool June morning, with the dust of the roads a little laid by the night's dew. The members of the Congress could not go far; there was a session as on other days, with much to be done. The good-bys, the good wishes, the good hopes, could not be spoken; they turned back to be at their own share of the country's business while the Commander-in-Chief went on.

Twenty miles out from Philadelphia, Washington was met by a messenger, an express from Boston. There had been an engagement at Bunker's Hill, a triumph for American courage, but a costly defeat nonetheless—the loss of the position, a serious loss of men, and Charlestown burned. The disaster had come about from lack of ammunition, it was explained, but no explanation could give back Bunker Hill or General Joseph Warren, killed in action. Here was the first communication to the new general from

the field. How many, many times news of the same sort was to meet him. Now there was all the more reason for pressing on through a day that dissolved in cold rain. He crossed the Delaware for the first time, and his horse and his company turned northward.

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## CHAPTER VIII

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### *John Dickinson*

THE members of the escorting company returned to the city and settled to their day's work, finding the afternoon long and heavy, even in the Hall of Congress. News of Bunker Hill had spread through the city and there had descended upon the spirits of all that heavy pall which goes with tidings of disaster. When people heard the rain beating against the windows and running in the gutters, their minds went back to that little group on horseback, their shoulders hunched now and their heads bent to the storm, still faring steadily northward. Late in the day in Congress, along with the dragging debate on the denominations of the bills of credit which were to be issued, it was decided to appoint a committee for composing a declaration for Washington to issue to the world from his camp at Cambridge.

Among all that gathering there was one to whom the scene could not be dull or heavy, since it was so novel, one who was scanning the faces around him with observing and speculative eyes, since he was acquainted with only the smallest number. He was the new delegate from Virginia who had arrived three days before, traveling by phaeton from Albemarle County, bringing a violin in his various baggage. Those who cast rapid, appraising glances in his direction could see that he was lanky, with reddish hair and an eager, open countenance. It was known that, although he was among the very youngest of the members, he had come attended by a considerable reputation for literary ability, but of this he seemed to be pleasantly unconscious. He was Thomas Jefferson.

It is perhaps one of the best lights that we have upon Peyton

Randolph, a man of such dignity and prestige and a certain careful, fair conservatism, that he was so well satisfied to have this very liberal young man appointed to be his successor in the Congress. In March of 1775, when new delegates from Virginia were to be named, it was foreseen that Randolph might be needed in the counsels of his own colony, so that an alternate was selected in the person of Thomas Jefferson. The necessity for Randolph's return came much sooner than was expected. He had accepted the presidency of the Congress for the second time but had served only a few days before Governor Dunmore summoned the House of Burgesses for such serious deliberations that it was evident their presiding officer must be present and for an indefinite time. The occasion was the consideration of that Conciliatory Motion of Lord North's which Isaac Barré had called, in Parliament, a "bait for gudgeons." Randolph retained young Jefferson long enough to draft the answer which was to be presented to Governor Dunmore and ultimately to Lord North. It was a wise choice but a bold one, since the mind of Jefferson was not only well up with his time but, in many ways, considerably in advance of it.

"I had never been able to get anyone to agree with me but Mr. Wythe," he declared cheerfully in the matter of another, earlier paper, *A Summary View of the Rights of British America*, which he had written the year before as a tentative scheme of instructions to the delegates Virginia was sending to the Congress. Although the majority of cautious souls in the House of Burgesses refused to consider it, the discussion was printed as a pamphlet in Williamsburg and later, amended by Burke, was issued in London for the support of the opposition in Parliament. The little publication had already preceded Jefferson to Philadelphia, and the Congress, having a good eye and ear for intelligent views and literary style, proceeded at once to find him plenty of writing to do. Later, when it became the turn of the Congress to reply to Lord North's conciliatory offers, Jefferson again drafted the reply. And it was only five days after his arrival, when the



original committee brought in an unsatisfactory version of the Declaration on Taking up Arms, that Jefferson, along with John Dickinson, was added to the committee.

Jefferson was asked to write the new draft, but, so he recorded later, "It was too strong for Mr. Dickinson" in its strictures on the British government, and Dickinson finally took over the matter of presenting his own version. He retained only the conclusion of the Virginian's composition, and even that was paraphrased to follow his own terser and less magnetic style. This last form of the paper was adopted, and the Declaration on Taking up Arms was duly issued by Washington and took its place among the great state papers of the Congress. It was Jefferson's opportunity to take the measure of John Dickinson and to have his first association with that great man of the Congress, Benjamin Franklin, who was one of the original committee. Like young Josiah Quincy, like a host of other young men, Jefferson was drawn to Franklin, finding in him a world of common interests from philosophy to gadgets. Among the friendships formed during that period of common work and common anxieties, this was one of those which was to be unbroken, and lasted to the very end of Franklin's life.

Outside the walls of Congress he soon made friends with Dr. Benjamin Rush, who was much nearer to his own age and whose republican principles, although half formed and still somewhat timid, were of promising quality. The intense nature of Benjamin Rush led him into numerous controversies and quarrels, but with two men he retained uninterrupted affection and communication, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson. Such continuity cannot be recorded of the intercourse between John Adams and Thomas Jefferson themselves; it was warm and delightful in these earlier years, was harshly broken in later political life, and taken up again, long after, when two old men looked back upon their past and saw once more the real truth about each other. And the medium of their reconciliation was Benjamin Rush.

"Though a silent member of the Congress he was so prompt, frank, explicit, and decisive upon committee and in conversation—not even Samuel Adams was more so—that he soon seized upon my heart," John Adams said of Jefferson. In spite of such liking, the conscientious John Adams was somewhat troubled over the irregularity with which the young man from Virginia attended to his duties in the Congress. Many times, there is no doubt, Jefferson was writing at home in his rooms at Mr. Graaf's, for he did not feel himself too good to draft long reports and factual summaries when they fell to his share as work on different committees. Adams might have been shocked indeed had he seen Jefferson putting down in his account book for June first, 1776, "to seeing a monkey, 1/s," an extravagance which had been matched earlier in Williamsburg by his paying 1/s for "seeing a tyger." One thing that Adams failed to gauge was Jefferson's ever alive and consuming curiosity.

George Wythe was there, his old preceptor with whom he had studied law for five years, available still for consultation and continued agreement. But for Samuel Adams, Jefferson seems to have had the greatest admiration of all, even though he said later with regret, "The disparity of age prevented intimate and confidential communications." The young man from Virginia, with fortune and general esteem to back him, understood at once the reticent, little regarded, astute politician from Massachusetts. Samuel Adams's deep patriotism was at once visible to him, as well as his great ability. They had, moreover, one thing very much in common, a dislike of public speaking. Adams addressed the Congress seldom, Jefferson never.

With that eager curiosity, that appreciation of others, that open mind, he was still very much a young man in the making. His architectural taste, which was later to be stamped so firmly on his nation's capital, was extending and deepening as he looked at the stout, red brick, comfortable mansions of Philadelphia, as his eye explored the beautiful proportions of that room in the

State House where the Congress met. He was forming his taste in people, seeing and appreciating the worth of men from other colonies, shaking off any vestige of that "state prejudice" which was the bane and the obstruction of so much of the action of the Congress. He was settling, deep within himself, those beliefs in democracy which he was to consider so long and to embody later in the very fabric of American government. He was watching the people, not only his own colleagues, but the men who walked the streets of Philadelphia to their labor, the women who came in from the farms with produce to sell, the indentured servants and the slaves. He was observing the plants, the crops, the trees that grew so grandly in the deep Pennsylvania soil, the great round oaks and the broad beeches with their elbows on the ground. Long after, he wrote to Charles Willson Peale, "Though I am an old man, I am a young gardener." That youth which was to survive so late was at its lustiest and most acquisitive stage now; he was a young farmer, a young statesman, a young writer, a young democrat. The young man, with his ideas and his career just unfolding, will stand forever as the antithesis to another. John Dickinson was a farmer, a writer, a statesman, in the eyes of his admirers—but his likeness to Jefferson stopped abruptly there.

In this first half of the year 1775, anyone, including the newly arrived Thomas Jefferson, could easily see that it was Mr. Dickinson's Congress. His leadership was obvious, as were obvious also the two strong currents of feeling which had begun to be evident in the earlier session, moderate in opposition to violent. The advent of real fighting served to accentuate the difference with bitter clarity. The Adamses, Lee, and others, like Christopher Gadsden of South Carolina and Lyman Hall of Georgia, but principally John Adams, thought that it was time to recognize that the situation was completely altered and that the policies of the Congress must be shaped accordingly. Most of the New England delegates, with some wavering and some disagreements

within their own representatives, stood with them. But there were others who still believed that the way back was feasible. Reconciliation with England and renewal of good will was still not impossible, they urged, and insisted that there would be deep regret if the last and utmost effort were not attempted. Those who had stood with Joseph Galloway because of his conservatism and his desire to re-establish good relations with the King, now turned to the far more able and truly patriotic leader, John Dickinson. Hewes of North Carolina was of the same mind as he; so were the New York delegates to a man, not only those who sat and voted without much comment, but also those who were already important persons—Robert Livingston and James Duane, who were brothers-in-law, John Jay and another Livingston brother, William, who represented New Jersey.

John Hancock, cautious, patriotic, but unable to forget entirely his great mercantile interests, tended toward their side, as did almost the whole number of the South Carolina delegates, Lynch, Middleton, and—most of the time—Edward Rutledge. The majority for cautious proceedings was a great one, since inclination, hope, and the infectious reasonableness of John Dickinson's arguments easily carried all conservative minds with him. Everyone who came to the Congress had heard of him, nearly all had read his work. After they arrived in Philadelphia they were to learn more of him and to realize why he loomed so important in all the affairs of Philadelphia, why he was the man who would most naturally come to leadership at just this juncture.

Four generations earlier, three Dickinson brothers, all members of the Society of Friends, had come to America, fleeing one of those religious persecutions which were, so it might seem, the invaluable gift of society to the empty and waiting country. They settled in Virginia in the middle of the seventeenth century and prospered there. One of them presently moved to Maryland and acquired an estate on the Eastern Shore, called by the oddly un-

Quakerish name of Crosia Dorée. It was here, in a later generation, that John Dickinson was born. His father, educated as a lawyer, had settled to the easy, comfortable life of a prosperous landed proprietor and thoroughly believed that the highest purpose of the head of a family should be to secure for his children all that was agreeable, safe, and satisfying. His mother, Mary Cadwalader, was daughter of one of the staunchest Quaker families in Philadelphia, a woman of force and vigor, whose influence over her son was strong and lasted throughout her life. Although the boy was frail, his was a free and happy existence in that pleasant version of living, in the green farming country swept by salt winds coming in from the sea. He grew to be a man delicate-looking and slenderly built, but with the sharp endurance of body and mind that goes with a determined will.

His father, for the benefit of the education of his children, moved to Dover, in those lower counties of the Delaware which were united with Pennsylvania only to the extent of having the same governor and the same charter, but which had their own Assembly. John Dickinson was sent to the school of Dr. Francis Alison, an establishment which was to become famous for the number of future public men who began their education there, among them Charles Thomson, Thomas McKean, and George Read. Later, Dickinson went to the College of Philadelphia, that institution in which Benjamin Franklin and Dr. Fothergill were so greatly interested and where so many of the contending leaders of Pennsylvania politics laid down their enmities and served together as friends and colleagues on the board of trustees. After college he studied law in the office of John Moland, the leading legal authority of Philadelphia.

Young Dickinson had, however, an idea of a larger opportunity and, though he completed his studies conscientiously, he finally persuaded his father to send him abroad for the cherished training of the Middle Temple. Mr. John Moland had got his

legal education there; so had the Tilghmans and Joseph Reed and Thomas McKean. The Lees of Virginia were sent to England for the same purpose, as were the Rutledges and Arthur Middleton, whom Dickinson was to meet in the Congress later.

The three years that John Dickinson spent in London, housed in the old hostel of the Knights Templars, left an ineffaceable stamp upon his taste and his thinking. London was an astounding place to him in its mid-eighteenth century glories; the wit, the talent, the gaiety, the ambitions, the rivalries were all revelations to the young men from the colonies. He was a contemporary, in the law school, of Lord Thurlow, afterward Lord Chancellor, of William Cowper the poet, and of Wills Hill, who, as Lord Hillsborough, was to be Secretary of State for the American colonies just as Dickinson was coming into political prominence at home.

Here he was introduced to the greatness and solidarity of the British Constitution, in which tradition and established custom, slowly accumulated, were taken as the source and foundation of political and legal procedure. He learned a reverence for British law which possessed him for the rest of his life, became as much a part of him as his reasoned caution, his instinctive dislike of change, his shrinking from the thought of destroying those bonds of respect and affection which held the new country to the old. He was a young man of strong feeling for places as well as for people, so that he could never put from him the stirring memory of London and all it stood for, of the stately, aged buildings, the green squares, the gardens of the Temple where the nightingales sang. Great legal and political reputations were being made: Lord Mansfield was rising to the height of his honors, people were beginning to be aware of the extraordinary powers of Edmund Burke and to shake their heads over the dissipations of Fox. On that side of the water British policy and British colonial problems assumed one aspect, while, on his return to Pennsylvania, they showed quite another. For all those troubled years which were

to follow he was to have a clear and disconcerting awareness of both sides of the picture.

Once re-established in Philadelphia, he rose easily to a place of prominence in both legal and political circles. John Dickinson was so likable, so sympathetic, so thoroughly to be trusted, that everyone had high regard for him. And so he became the young political ally of Isaac Norris, married Norris's daughter, and settled down at Fairhill. Life there was easy, leisurely, and delightful, as it had been at Crosia Dorée. For him it was a symbol of what American life could and should be, but not an end where, once arrived, a man should stop and never seek further.

When the Stamp Act opened the long series of political differences between England and her colonies, and during the period of protest and resistance which followed, Dickinson's clear head and penetrating wisdom stood the country in good stead. Benjamin Franklin wrote from London to his old friend Charles Thomson, whom he had known as a boy and for whom he procured a tutor's place at the College of Philadelphia. Franklin spoke of the passage of that hated and portentous act of Parliament which no political effort on the part of the colonial agents could possibly hold back.

We might as well have hindered the Sun's setting—and that we could not do. But since 'tis done, my friend, and it may be a long time before it rises again, let us make as good a Night as we can. We may still light candles. Frugality and Industry will go a great way toward indemnifying us. Idleness and Pride tax with a heavier hand than Kings and Parliament.

John Dickinson lit his own candle in a series of articles, a simple and complete explanation for all men to read and understand, of what were the American rights in the matter. The first of the *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania* appeared in December of 1767, and were followed rapidly by the thirteen others. Conservative thought, tolerance, clear logic, and equally clear

justice were all brought to bear upon this first great defense of American rights.

The Farmer's letters and the Farmer himself became widely known. Only *Common Sense*, at a later and more critical time, was accepted as eagerly and excitedly. Dickinson was as much read and as much regarded in Massachusetts as in his own province. Benjamin Franklin had been definitely in political opposition to him and his party in Pennsylvania, but nonetheless, Franklin had the *Letters* reprinted in London, since he knew how strong their influence would be. They were referred to and commented on in both Houses of Parliament. The simplicity and clarity of the analysis and the fundamental conceptions of legal justice in the *Letters* were as appropriate to the burning questions of 1774 as they had been to the lesser but equally ominous problems of seven years before.

My beloved Countrymen [the first letter began], I am a Farmer settled after a variety of fortunes near the banks of the Delaware, in the Province of Pennsylvania. I received a liberal education, and have been engaged in the busy scenes of life, but am now convinced that a man may be as happy without bustle as with it. My farm is small, my servants few and good; I have a little money at interest; I wish for no more. . . .

It is faintly possible that John Adams, on the day that he met John Dickinson, almost immediately after his first arrival in Philadelphia, did not recognize the exactness of this description. Dickinson rolled up to the door in his carriage with four splendid horses, filling the street with the rumble of wheels and the clatter of hoofs. But as he came in, pale from a recent illness, looking delicate, tired, yet with the light of patriotic determination so apparent in his thin face, the New Englander warmed to him as he had to few others. Adams had accepted humbly, though with some bitterness, the advice and warning of those other Pennsylvanians who met him at the inn at Frankford. But in the case



of John Dickinson there were no defensive reserves, no fear of a sharp edge of warning criticism to destroy the pleasure of their first meeting. From the beginning these two were friends. During the whole of that first session of the Congress this friendship grew and blossomed, so that Adams could speak with a rare and keen delight of that late summer day when he, with John and Mary Dickinson, with Charles and Hannah Thomson, in the warm beauty of the Pennsylvania air, had a visit in the country together. Adams, two weeks before, had dined at Fairhill, but in company with others. But here were friends meeting intimately together, much, it seemed, of the same mind, vitally concerned with the same subject. Dickinson spoke frankly of all that was in his heart for the welfare of his country, and Adams could agree with him. John Adams wrote happily in his journal that evening, "A most delightful afternoon we had, sweet communion indeed." He was very seldom moved to words of such feeling.

It is easy to see, therefore, why, through the next year of 1775, John Dickinson dominated the Congress. He had everything which leadership required. His family had been landholders through all the century of settlement; they were identified with Virginia, with Maryland, with what was to be Delaware, with Pennsylvania. He was a man of wealth and also of high professional standing. He had been long in political life and was backed by the strong influence of the Quakers, by the aristocrats and the conservatives of the province. He was an author of repute. Moreover, he had winning manners and a reassuring personality. Men who had heard of him were not disappointed when they met him; here was a man of sound thought, of palpable honesty, a man to follow. And besides all this he was a man who wanted peace, who would give all he had, all his wisdom and effort to achieve it, and who thought he could achieve it. But there were a few in the Congress who began to think that the price which he would pay was too high.

An entirely new movement calls for new leadership. The con-

cept of natural, not merely legal, liberty, the full belief in the political equality of mankind, were still unaccepted by many thinking men. It was easier to believe that a compromise with the old order would do; it took hard, bold minds to see that the old was really dead and there must be something now which men had never known before. John Dickinson was a patriot, but there were some things that he did not see.

When the stirring news arrived that Ethan Allen and Benedict Arnold, between them—with a little confusion as to whose was the real credit—had captured Ticonderoga and its much needed stores, there was talk of making a careful inventory of the cannon, powder, and supplies that had been taken, so that they could be accounted for to the British government and returned when hostilities were over. Meanwhile there was nothing to prevent the same military stores from being loaded on oxcarts or moved by any means possible and taken to Boston to be shot off at the British. It was this ordnance, brought from Ticonderoga, that eventually drove the King's troops out of Boston.

When, a little later, the tidings came that Lord North was offering his Plan of Conciliation to the colonies one by one, there was polite consideration but no hesitation as to how to act. The nature of the bait was immediately plain to everyone. It was obviously the ministry's hope that the colonies would drop off separately from their union, like wind-blown apples, and the few obstinate unregenerates would be left alone. But the spirit of unity was already too strong for that. More members than Peyton Randolph alone went home to lend the force of their arguments. It was in New Jersey that the issue came up first, presented by Governor William Franklin. Various members went from the Congress, among them John Jay, to address the New Jersey Assembly when the question was debated. It is worth noting that John Jay, in preparing for his speech, felt it necessary to stress the fact that the gathering at Philadelphia had no intention of suggesting independence. He made a careful survey of the Jour-

nals of Congress to find all the instances when that body had declared that it was against any such intention.

Among those designated to address the New Jersey Assembly, John Adams was not included. It was significant, also, that he was not selected as a member of the committee for drawing up the Declaration on Taking up Arms. Ordinarily, when a man had been important in the presenting of a measure, he was made chairman of any committee for preparing a statement in relation to his motion. During the session of the Congress in 1774, Adams was driven to death with committee work, but it was not so in 1775. The moderate party had marked him as a man entertaining dangerous ideas, and his time was accordingly far less in demand. With his proposal concerning the army he had taken the Congress by surprise and had put through a measure so obviously just and necessary that it had been impossible to vote it down. He was not to be allowed such opportunity again if his antagonists could prevent it. Moreover, he was proceeding to make himself even more obnoxious in the matter which was under discussion in the Congress now, that of the second Petition to the King.

Dickinson and his colleagues had proposed it and were backing it strongly. It was still believed by many that the ministry had been pulling the wool over a gracious monarch's eyes and that a plain and convincing statement from America would make him see the truth at last. Although Benjamin Franklin was there to recount the sorry adventures of the first petition, these indomitable optimists remained unconvinced. In vain did John Adams protest that there was no longer time for debate on such matters, that the army must be organized and equipped, systems of supply must be established, financial schedules set up. The plan for the capture of Canada had already been set on foot, but no one seemed to realize the difficulties in supporting and carrying it out. It was over the matter of the second petition that there occurred the violent clash between Dickinson and John Adams.

They had been friends from the first; they should have remained friends. Adams was a man who could irritate people greatly by his obstinacy, often the more because the obstinacy was so likely to turn out to be entirely warranted. He was a fine supporter of the Biblical admonition against suffering fools gladly. But between him and Dickinson there was every reason for deep and permanent accord, so far as personal relations went. Even now he understood Dickinson's position, how his Quaker associates, how his wife and mother were daily at work upon him to hold him back from taking any belligerent step. Adams heard through Charles Thomson of their frantic protests.

"Johnny, you will be hanged." "You will leave your excellent wife a widow and your charming children orphans, beggars and infamous."

No man could ever think for a moment that Dickinson could be held back from any justified step by the fear of hanging. But no one could fail to know that the distress of those who are dear to a man, and their increasing agony as he goes forward on his way, must make the most determined heart falter. "From my soul I pitied Mr. Dickinson," Adams declared, contemplating what his own misery would have been had not his family circle and their relatives, the Adamses, the Quincys, the Cranches, been of the same mind with him. But pity did not move him to yield in the Homeric struggle which was now beginning between them. It was Dickinson's dignity which broke first.

There was one day, when summer and its heavy blanket of heat was well upon them and the matter of the petition had been long and warmly debated, that John Adams brought one of his speeches of protest to an end. He had driven home the arguments which could not be ignored, had cited the earlier failure of an appeal to the King, the present pressure of other business, the hopeless attitude of the Crown, and the parlous condition of America's affairs. He sat down, and John Sullivan of New Hampshire rose to support his position. Sullivan was possessed

of wit and fluency and was capable also of good, reasoned logic. The cause of the petition was certainly suffering at the hands of New England that day. Someone presently brought in a message that Mr. Adams was wanted outside. He took up his three-cornered hat and went out, leaving Sullivan still in command of the field. To his surprise he found himself followed, in hot haste, by John Dickinson. Adams observed that he was paler even than usual, that his voice was unsteady, that he was violently angry.

"What is the reason that you New England men oppose our measures of reconciliation?" he broke out. He was utterly outraged, it seemed, by having Sullivan stand by Adams so ably in opposition to his cherished petition.

"Look ye," he declared violently, "if you don't concur in our pacific system, I and a number of us will break off from you in New England and we will carry on the opposition by ourselves in our own way."

This was hard speech to address to a man from that colony where an invading army was occupying her seaports and already beginning to lay waste her country, a colony utterly unable to offer sufficient resistance alone. Adams, so he himself liked to remember, was on this occasion as calm as the other was furious. He was not to be driven by threats from his resistance to the petition, so he told his former friend.

"Congress must judge," he ended, "and if they pronounce against me, I must submit, as, if they determine against you, you ought to acquiesce."

No further words passed between them. There were still debates between them on the floor of Congress, but, so Adams admitted ingenuously, their relations were not improved by the fact that Adams failed and Dickinson triumphed. The measure for the petition passed and a committee was ordered to frame it and send it to England by the hand of Mr. Richard Penn, member of the proprietary family and brother of the Governor, who had offered to take it. A committee was chosen to compose the com-

munication to King George. John Jay had been one of its warm advocates and had been the one actually to move the proposal. But in the end the petition was Dickinson's composition. It lacked some of the fine clarity of his earlier writing.

"Your Majesty's ministers . . . have compelled us to arm in our own defence." "Your Majesty may be pleased to direct some mode . . ."

Some of its stipulations might have been difficult for the King to follow if he had ever cast his royal eye down the page. It was with high hope, however, that it was completed, approved, and signed. John Adams lived up to his agreement that he would abide by the judgment of the Congress. He put his name to it, as did Samuel Adams also, with the other members. Sullivan did not, but only because he had already left to join the army before Boston. The document was duly dispatched and reached the hands of Lord Dartmouth toward the end of August. John Adams had submitted to the will of the Congress, but meanwhile, unwittingly but with fatal effectiveness, he had administered a blow to all John Dickinson's high purposes. As is often the case with portentous occurrences, it began with a very small matter.

There happened to be in Philadelphia a young man by the name of Hichborne, who lived in Boston and who was slightly acquainted with John Adams. He waited on his fellow townsman one day in late July and said that he was going home and would be glad to do Mr. Adams the favor of carrying back any letter that he might have for his family or friends. The busy Mr. Adams said that he had no time to write anything now, so oppressed was he with the duties of the Congress. Hichborne came again, on the eve of his departure, and still Adams had nothing for him. The young man, to whom the matter was of great importance, revealed the truth. He had served his legal clerkship with a Mr. Fitch, who was now under suspicion for having Tory affiliations. The boy was a good patriot himself, but the association with Fitch was working to his harm. If Adams would only

entrust him with a single letter to one of his family, the very fact would show that there was reason to have confidence in him and there would be no more such feeling as was bidding fair to ruin his prospects for a legal career. John Adams's heart was touched by the young fellow's plight, although he recorded crustily later that it was to get rid of his importunity that he sat down to write a few hasty lines to Mrs. Adams and, as an afterthought, to his good friend and political colleague, James Warren. And, as can easily happen when a man is in haste and also has spent a long, grueling day over public affairs which were not going to his liking, he was unguardedly frank and spoke, on rash impulse, of certain matters near to his heart.

"I am determined to write freely to you this time," he declared to Warren. "A certain great fortune and piddling genius, whose fame has been trumpeted so loudly, has given a silly cast to our whole doings. We are between hawk and buzzard."

He went on to set forth exactly what they should be doing instead of debating John Dickinson's measure. He wanted the Congress to set up a government for the whole continent—legislative, executive, and judicial; he wanted a constitution, a navy, and the opening of the ports to foreign commerce excluding that of Britain; he wanted all officers of the royal government to be seized and held as hostages for the people shut up in Boston by the British Army. All these plans and desires he rehearsed at length in his letter to Warren. "Is all this extravagant? Is it wild? Is it not the soundest policy?" There were few at that time who would have said that it was very sound, although it was what America achieved fully in the end. Yet it was no moment to commit such thoughts to paper in a letter which was to travel into an area threatened by a hostile army.

Added to his letter to Warren he sent, by the same messenger, one to his Abigail, in the same mood of fine candor. "No mortal tale can equal it," he said of the behavior of the Congress. "The fidgets, the whims, the caprice, the vanity, the superstition, the

inability—" Words failed him as he brought the letter to an end.

The unfortunate Mr. Hichborne—for there is no reason to believe that he was anything but unfortunate—was crossing the Hudson River when he was pursued by British sailors in boats from a man-of-war. Destruction of the letters was rather ineptly attempted and was a total failure. The papers were seized, carried to New York, and published in a loyalist paper, the originals being forwarded to London. Adams said the publication contained a certain amount of garbling, but it needed very little garbling to render them disastrous to some cherished hopes. Here was a complete statement of those shocking views of the New Englanders which, no matter what anyone said, really stood for independence and nothing less. The copies of the New York papers reached England simultaneously with the second Petition to the King. Here, so one of the Congress was declaring, was an address to His Majesty written by a piddling genius who had not a unanimous body behind him but one full of smallnesses, quarrels, and disagreements. Nothing could have been more untimely nor, what was far worse, more ridiculous. One morning, soon after the tidings of this affair had reached Philadelphia, John Adams was walking through Chestnut Street from his lodgings to the State House for the opening of the session. He saw John Dickinson coming toward him and cordially removed his hat. Dickinson passed him with a face of stone.

"I was determined," said the unquenched Adams in his diary, "to make my bow that I might know his temper."

He knew it now, nor was there to be any doubt of it for all the future time that they were in the Congress together. And it was still Mr. Dickinson's Congress.



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## CHAPTER IX

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### *Mr. Peale's Portrait Gallery*

AS the summer of 1775 passed and the heat relaxed into the easy, soft weather of the second autumn in Philadelphia, the lines of feeling and of belief continued to harden into more and more definite separations. The clearest and most visible evidence of this fact was that when Mr. John Adams went through the streets about his numerous errands, he walked alone. So intricate had political affairs become that everyone had matters to discuss, to consult over, to gossip about. There were so many questions to consider, in Congress and out, that scarcely one man could meet another without stopping to exchange views. But not with this man from Massachusetts. Groups and knots of eagerly talking men on the corners, in the doors of the taverns, would fall into silence and watch him go by. Here was the man whose indiscretion had spilled the carefully hidden facts, had made it known abroad that the boasted unanimity of the American Congress was a front put up to impress the adversary. Here was the man who had given the world notice that there were really some who were moving for independence.

Adams was not, however, entirely deserted, even in this darkest period of his whole career. His journal no longer recorded engagements to dine in the great houses, nor suppers with companions at the City Tavern. But it offers proof that there were men who still believed in him and who stood by in the conviction that he was right when the great majority of his colleagues registered their earnest belief that he was wrong. Joseph Reed, who was now Washington's secretary, but who met Adams on some chance connection of business, declared to him with emphasis

that the publication of the letters was the best possible good fortune. "For independence was certainly inevitable and it was happy that the whole country had been compelled to turn their thoughts upon it." Benjamin Rush noted with distress that lonely figure walking the streets of Philadelphia and came in the evenings to Adams's lodgings, now at Mrs. Yard's, to offer his respects and to discuss the burning matters that filled all their thoughts. And while the friendship with Dickinson, which had seemed to give so much promise once, had crashed to its fall, a new one was slowly emerging which was to have an even more important place in Adams's life and in the history of America.

His first meeting with Richard Henry Lee was at the City Tavern, a few days after his original arrival in Philadelphia. Since that "Frankford advice" was still echoing harshly in his ears, he had good reason to examine these men from Virginia to whom he was now introduced—Randolph, Pendleton, Harrison, Lee, and Bland. He observed, as everyone did on first meeting Lee, that fine-cut countenance, the high curved forehead, with the aquiline nose carrying the same curve downward, the intelligent eyes, the modeling of the mouth, the instinctive expression of aristocracy into which an adversary could read an implication of scorn. Benjamin Harrison was his exact opposite, heavy in voice, in manner, in thought, an aristocrat of the aristocrats too, but wholly at variance with everything that characterized his younger colleague. For Lee was a new sort of Virginia aristocrat, carrying all the prestige, the learning, and the impulse for public service that went with his heritage, over into the broader service of his country and countrymen. With Patrick Henry, with four of his five brothers, he stood for the rights of the humble man, for the general good, not that of the particular and the chosen.

The six Lees of Stratford, in Westmoreland County, were something of a legend even beyond the borders of Virginia. Sons and grandsons of Lees who had been high in the counsels of the

royal governors, and highly favored adherents of the King, still this generation, with one exception, cast their lot elsewhere. The oldest brother, Philip Ludwell, chose to retain his loyalist connections, but his death in 1775 spared the family an even more tragic separation. The three older brothers were sent to England as a matter of course for their education; Richard Henry spent the years from the age of twelve to nineteen at school in Wakefield, while his brothers were trained in law at the Middle Temple. On their father's death in 1750 they all came home, to get acquainted once more with their sisters and their youngest brothers, Francis Lightfoot, William, and Arthur, whose teaching had been carried out simply by their old Scotch tutor, the Reverend Mr. Craig. So affluent had their father become in the matter of landholding, that he left a separate plantation to each of his four oldest sons. That coming to Richard Henry was Chantilly, near Stratford, neither a very large nor a very prosperous estate, but sufficient to determine Richard Henry's place and his occupation in life. His scholarly mind had its full bent here; his deep interest in the history and philosophy of government absorbed long hours of intent and happy study, varied with many long hours of letter-writing.

All the Lees were handsome, had charm and ready address, were politically minded and of energetic spirit, and each carried out his destiny in his own way. It was the custom that, in all the large families of Virginia planters, one member should take up residence in London to receive and market the annual shipments of tobacco and to turn the proceeds into the goods which the households in America would require for the next year. William elected to become the merchant among the six brothers; he moved to London and was set up in business. By the time Josiah Quincy met him in England he had become eminently successful, a prosperous man of affairs, an alderman of the City of London, and a prime mover in all those protests which the Lord Mayor and the Livery put before the King in support of America.

Arthur, the youngest, was sent abroad to school at the age of eleven. He studied medicine in Edinburgh, but later turned to the law and to the familiar precincts of the Middle Temple. Of great importance to all concerned was the close and affectionate link between Richard Henry and these two brothers across the water—they could not be called expatriates, for they all considered themselves Englishmen. Richard Henry was untiring in his attention to William's business affairs in America, especially for the estate in which William's wife, Hannah Ludwell Lee, had a half-interest, concerning which he wrote letters without end to London in every effort to carry out William's sometimes rather unreasonable directions. But it was the correspondence with his youngest brother, stimulated by common interest in the same great matters and founded on an unshakable brotherly affection, which was of the most moment to the Lees and to America. Richard Henry, in his place in the Congress, was known to be in closer touch than any of the other members with affairs in England. Arthur, who had gone abroad as a child and an orphan and henceforth had spent all his time in England with only the briefest and most unsatisfied interval in America, still never looked on British affairs with anything but steady American patriotism, and with an eye particularly for the well-being of his own country. He was an excellent letter-writer, observing, concise, with an instinctive sense of what was important rather than merely interesting. As the British net to catch American correspondence grew tighter and tighter, he conceived more and more ingenious ways in which to reach his brother. When in November of 1775 Richard Henry wrote to Catherine Macaulay that "we regret not having heard from England since early in September," we realize how close a watch the British ministry was keeping and we become aware of a silence which was to grow more and more ominous as the months went by.

Richard Henry's speeches have not been preserved, but the grace, force, and occasional twist of sardonic humor of his let-

ters make it clear that he had rightly earned that reputation for effective address which, when he arrived in Philadelphia, was second only to Patrick Henry's. Among the letters and journals of the members, there is more reference to the convincing oratory of Lee than of Henry, as debate went forward. The power and the personal charm of his letters had already had much to do with helping the country to come together. For some time he had been in correspondence with several important men in the various colonies, among them John Dickinson and Samuel Adams. It was his letter to Samuel Adams early in the year 1773, beginning "From a person quite unknown to you, some apology may be necessary for this letter," that laid the foundation of a long-lasting and far-reaching friendship. When he wrote later to Samuel Adams of "the well-deserved fate which befell the Tea on your quarter," he showed himself an advocate of liberal ideas after the true Adams pattern. If John Dickinson, whose feelings about the tea were quite otherwise, had been the recipient of such a missive he would have put Lee down, even so early in the day, as one of the violent men.

With his talents, with his political prestige, with his landed property and his devoted friends, Lee was, nonetheless, far from being the darling of fortune. One of his early ambitions had been for military service and, like Washington, he was a colonel of Virginia militia. He had offered himself to Braddock for the campaign against the French, and had been refused with such complete lack of courtesy and appreciation that it was long a sore memory. And, presently, through the bursting of a gun when he was hunting swans, his left hand was maimed and rendered useless, so that any thought of a military career was at an end. He was still Colonel Lee when he came to the Congress, but an officer in the field he could never be. And in his political career there was always the bitter knowledge that certain of his colleagues would never forgive him for the courageous stand he had made as a young politician in his demand for an investiga-

tion of the misused finances of the colony. A committee to examine the records had been appointed, but it had completely exonerated the accused official who held the office both of Treasurer of the colony and Speaker of the House of Burgesses. The man's death, however, in the following year, opened to the world the whole of his chicanery and revealed also an appalling number of the great and respected who had been involved with him. Of those men who never forgave Lee for being right, some had come to the Congress with him. "I have been so long familiar with misfortune," he wrote to his brother William, "that I have learned to look upon adversity with an undisturbed mind and a steady countenance."

But in spite of that bitter acceptance of the hard things in life, Lee was a man of astonishingly hopeful temperament. He sincerely expected the Association for Nonintercourse to have immediate effect in bringing England to terms with America. In the summer of 1773 he sent his two boys to England to be educated—Thomas aged fourteen, Ludwell aged twelve. He consigned them to the care of two kindly and devoted brothers, but for most men even that reassurance would have scarcely been enough in view of the parlous times that were visibly approaching. And in February, 1775, he wrote to Arthur Lee, "We understand that Canada will have delegates in the next Congress," a trusting belief which circumstances were far from bearing out.

When the Congress first came together in that hot September of 1774, Lee and Samuel Adams, although they had never seen each other before, already felt themselves to be well acquainted. But to John Adams the handsome Virginian was an entire stranger. Adams first heard him debate in the matter of whether the voting should be by individuals or by colonies, settled to be by colonies, as was natural in that period when the sense of the separateness and differing identity of the provinces was so strong. And later, on that day when support of Massachusetts and her Suffolk Resolves was debated, he had heard Richard

Henry Lee put the motion that "this Assembly deeply feels the suffering of their countrymen in the Massachusetts Bay Colony under the operation of the late unjust, cruel, and oppressive acts of the British Parliament." He felt his heart warm to that gentleman, in relieved and patriotic happiness. About a week after this, when they had both been to a vast and formal dinner given by Chief Justice Chew in his magnificent house in Germantown, Lee came home with John Adams to his lodgings and they sat in intimate and personal talk through the evening and advanced from acquaintanceship to being friends.

The association of those three became more and more marked as time went on. If Virginia was to be given the leadership, it was quite acceptable to the "brace of Adamses" that proposals upon which they had agreed should be put before the Congress by Richard Henry Lee. He was a cautious, rather than a headlong, speaker. In resisting Joseph Galloway's plan he took the ground merely that no delegates had instructions from their colonies to enter into a plan of union. It was a real recognition of Virginia's leadership by consent of all the colonies, that it was given to him to move the proposal of the Association for Non-intercourse. But, as moderates drew away from those whom Thomas Jefferson began to call "the forward men"—although their adversaries still applied a less flattering term—as this cleavage came about, Richard Henry Lee began to fall into disrepute with all the conservatives, including those from his own colony. When John Adams was sent to Coventry, Richard Henry Lee was not one of those who forsook him. Lee was older than John Adams by a number of years, much older than he in political experience. But, when George Washington was in grave doubt as to the dangerous policy which this set of liberal friends were advocating, it was Lee who brought him to John Adams. Here was the man who could speak with real authority on that subject upon which Washington needed reassurance, the question of independence.

During the whole of this time, not all the politics in Philadelphia were being played out within the four walls of Carpenters' Hall and the State House, not even in the committee rooms and the delegates' lodgings. Philadelphia at large was taking its own part in public affairs, and the role was not a small one. All the dining out, all the slaughter of ducks and turkeys, all the roasting of whole pigs and quarters of mutton, all the serving of fools and tarts and jellies, the outpouring of port and Madeira, sherry and Burgundy, was not done without a purpose. Entertainment in the great houses, with a parade of powdered menservants and a rich display of plate, plainer collations in less splendid establishments, where the food was still overwhelmingly abundant and the cheer no less good, were all set on foot by men who wished and believed that just such abundance of good living should continue. The weight of solid entertainment could not actually bring about the alteration of public opinion; but open hospitality and friendly intercourse, followed by discussion, persuasion, and careful urging away from dangerous paths, could, and did, have very material effect. Slowly the moderates, the friends and associates of John Dickinson, seemed to be gaining in numbers, swinging to their opinion one man after another, one colony after another. Was not the ignoring of John Adams a mark of how far their victory had advanced? John Dickinson's policy was supported by the merchants, the landowners, the Quakers, all of them members of Philadelphia society with their own power and their own means of wielding it.

Many a man at that period went to bed at night counting on his fingers up to twelve. Georgia was, as yet, not officially represented, although Lyman Hall had arrived from the Parish of St. John's and at his own suggestion sat without vote. Thus there were twelve colonies whose opinions were to be mentally tallied and weighed from day to day. The two delegates from Rhode Island were fundamentally of opposite beliefs, so that it was not often that their small colony could offer an actual united vote,



thus reducing the count to a matter of eleven. The other New England colonies stood together—New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Connecticut—since their interests were identical. Virginia stood with them, for men like Lee, Wythe, Patrick Henry, and Thomas Jefferson could outvote the strongly conservative members like Harrison and, later, Carter Braxton. But in the geographical center of the country there was a strong core of conservatism that seemed unassailable. The proprietary colonies, whose settlement had been under personal grants from the King, had grown up to be provinces where, beyond any of the others, high position was by personal preferment and both Assembly and upper official life were strongly allied to the established government. With any alteration of the original charter, such as throwing off the King's rule would certainly bring, there was opened that terrible question: how much would the old, comfortable régime suffer from "that levelling influence" which was so obviously emanating from New England? It was worth any effort to keep away the threat of the town meeting variety of government, the open suffrage, the rule by the general majority of the citizens who, so any sensible aristocrat or prosperous merchant was certain, were totally incapable of wise judgment on public affairs. The four proprietary colonies—Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland and Delaware—were strongly controlled by Assemblies which would acknowledge no other guidance than the King's and that of his ministers. New York stood with these four, since in their case, also, there was identity of interests. North Carolina tended to follow Virginia. South Carolina was not settled on any one side or the other. So it was the delegation from South Carolina which became the object of unbounded social cordiality and entertainment.

The make-up of the delegation lent itself for the most part to the success of the project. It was natural that young Mr. and Mrs. Edward Rutledge and her brother Arthur Middleton should look forward to a gay social season in Philadelphia. With the elder

Rutledge, Middleton Sr., and the two Lynches, Sr. and Jr., they were a congenial group who dined out together happily and who took pleasure in the manner of living and the manner of entertainment that Philadelphia offered. Arthur Middleton Sr. had prepared for his sojourn in the city by engaging ahead of time "four, long-tail English horses" as an index of the sort of household he planned to set up. But the single other member of their delegation, Christopher Gadsden, was, in the eyes of even the most hopeful of the moderates, completely beyond their sort of influence. His colleagues said of him that he would be willing to take his firelock and march alone to Boston to raise the siege, if there were no one to go with him. They found him uncongenial, awkward to deal with, obstinate, unsympathetic in every way. No attempt was made to win him by dinners or even by Sunday afternoons over a bottle of Burgundy, so that he went his own lonely way of democratic liberalism.

Both the Rutledges admired John Adams and were inclined to agree with him on many of his proposals, but to identify themselves wholly with his party called for a social sacrifice over which anyone would hesitate long. Gone would be the popularity of their young wives, the availability of invitations to the balls, which John Adams never mentioned but to which George Washington went so conscientiously; gone would be access to the Philadelphia Assemblies, of such well-established reputation and such brilliant attendance. It is tradition that one of the serious-minded managers of an Assembly, trying to regulate a set and finding one young lady talking to her partner and inattentive to the business of the figure, said to her sharply, "Come, miss, take care what you are about. Do you think you are here for your pleasure?" There were many social functions of that august period which were not organized solely for the pleasure to be derived from them. The young wives would lose, also, the delightful intimacy with those who really belonged in Philadelphia society, the cosy afternoons over a cup of (imitation) tea at-

tended with such pleasant gossip that the nature of the beverage was but a small consideration. It was rumored that a New England delegate was paying court to a Philadelphia lady, and that her capitulation was probable; it was buzzed more insistently that the rich Mr. Hancock, the dazzlingly eligible bachelor, would bring a bride to Philadelphia when the August recess was over. The marriage, so it was reported, had been hurried forward by the gentleman because the lady, so much younger than he, had shown signs of interest in that dashing officer, Mr. Aaron Burr. And, sad to relate, that pleasant young Dr. Benjamin Rush was said to be deeply in love with the daughter of the Chief Justice of New Jersey, and would presently propose for her hand, so that the beauties of Philadelphia would have to look elsewhere. It would not have been human had not the young men from South Carolina and, equally, from other colonies, been beguiled by the idea of forming an intimate part of such society, and the opportunity of such acquaintance for themselves and their wives was bound to weigh indirectly but still heavily on their final line of inclination.

One important force in Philadelphia did not seek to win by display of splendid hospitality. Everyone felt, behind the brilliant social scene, the steady, careful power of the Quakers. There were all shades of opinion amongst them in this complicated time. But the forefront of those who stood firmly against the very thought of armed resistance was dominated by a figure already met with, that of Israel Pemberton. He has been spoken of as one who "found humility difficult" and "who seldom held his tongue for fear of giving offense." Under his influence, the Friends' yearly Meeting once and again issued testimonies demanding that all members of their society should show disapproval of any measure moving toward resistance to England and urging all people to beware of ultimate independence. It was only about thirty of the truly orthodox who supported this series of papers and protests, but the effect abroad was significant just

the same. There was another group which called itself the Free Quakers, who declared that in this emergency even Friends were justified in taking up arms. Out of their number, battalions were made up which drilled every day under instruction of their Quaker officers. Among these were Dickinson and Mifflin, who held commands in the local troops. They were mostly expelled from their various meetings, where the influence of Israel Pemberton was strong. Besides the Free Quakers were men like Stephen Collins and Christopher Marshall, numerous and quiet-spoken, who accepted the principle expressed early that "this Congress intend no violence to their consciences but earnestly recommend it to them that they contribute liberally . . . to the relief of their distressed brethren . . . and to do all other services to their oppressed Country which they can consistently with their religious principles." They did indeed generously relieve distress; they took their places on administrative committees; they gathered supplies for the army. And in their warm friendships and their quiet wisdom they bore their own part, along with the more conspicuous Pemberton and his like, in that intricate association of interest and influence which surrounded the deliberations of the Congress.

At the opposite extreme from Pemberton stood another figure of brilliant position but far less force of character. Mr. Richard Penn was brother of the present governor, once his deputy but now not on speaking terms with him. He invited the important delegates to dine at his splendid house, he made a point of trying to learn their point of view. He had not inherited the round, good-humored countenance which most of the Penns derived from the great Founder; his was a lean and hawk-nosed handsomeness of another kind. Though a Penn he was not a Friend. Dickinson's project of a second Petition to the King was close to his heart, and he had promised to take it to England himself to see that it got safely into the royal hands.

A guest whom the delegates met at all important functions was

Provost William Smith, head of the College of Philadelphia, a cordial man who, as Silas Deane observed, seemed to be everywhere. He preached well, was gracious in his manner, was avowedly a friend of liberty. But there were those who found something wanting in his zeal, something excessive in his ease of address to important strangers. It was whispered that he believed a continuance of royal government might well bring him a bishopric and that the vision of "a pair of lawn sleeves" was hard to put out of sight. The most popular preacher was Jacob Duché, who had read so moving a prayer at the opening of the Congress and to whose church the delegates flocked on Sundays.

Perhaps it would never have been possible to visualize so surely that rich pattern of personalities, the blend of wealth, dignity, political acumen, headlong zeal, and careful wisdom, had it not been for one man. On a certain day toward the end of 1775 a small handbill went the rounds of aristocratic and political Philadelphia, stating that "Mr. Cha: Peale presents his Compliments to the Ladies and Gentlemen of Philadelphia and begs leave to offer his services to paint their portraits small or large, if most agreeable, at their own houses. Mr. Peale is to be spoke with at Mrs. Yard's, Second Street."

The singularly attractive young man with his eager manners and his enthusiasm for liberty, had become, even before this notice was sent out, in great demand amongst those who were gathered to serve their country. Without him and certain of his portraits of a few years later, how could we ever believe how huge were the ladies' headdresses of the day, how rich were the embroidery and buttons of men's satin waistcoats. But more than that we would have failed of any conception of how these great men of history looked while they were in their earlier years, while many of them were on the threshold of their greatness, young for statesmanship, not all fully tried or known. He has shown us Robert Morris, plump, solid, and shrewd; Thomas Mifflin, with an unquenchable attractiveness in his

deep blue eyes and handsome, florid countenance. We have John Jay, thin and quiet, without that look of judicial confidence which dominates his later portraits; we have Samuel Chase, young and lusty with big cheekbones and an amused glance. We have the two Lees, Richard Henry and his brother Francis Lightfoot, with their family resemblance and their look of fine-drawn distinction; we have George Washington, looking young, gentle, and approachable, as he has not done under the hands of any other artist. We have both those early presidents of the Congress: John Hancock, elaborate of dress and somewhat harsh of feature, and Peyton Randolph with his heavy oval face, slightly prominent lips, and great air of dignity.

Among the list of notables there is yet one missing, the spirit of whose countenance Charles Peale could have captured, if any man might, a man with brown, visionary eyes and a look of quiet sympathy and friendliness for all the world, but not for its errors. In all this conglomeration of personalities, his was the most at variance with the rest, dynamically different and articulate and bold—for this was Thomas Paine. During the summer of 1775 he had been heard of only through some casual articles in the Pennsylvania papers, and people knew of him merely that he had arrived from England the year before, carried ashore ill from his ship, the whole sum of his assets a letter of introduction from Benjamin Franklin. The world knows so much of Thomas Paine that it is not necessary to attempt to say more of him, except to try to see him against the social tapestry of political Philadelphia. Benjamin Rush has declared that he sponsored the writing of *Common Sense*, that it sprang from a plan of his own, and that Paine, throughout the writing of it, was in consultation with him and read it aloud to him, chapter by chapter. Rush undertook the rather difficult matter of finding a publisher, but Mr. Robert Bell, on being approached, embraced the project with enthusiasm. Yet these are minor details. Rush did not write *Common Sense*, although he declares that he gave it that name. Paine wrote it—

no man but Thomas Paine could have done so. As the summer of the second Congress was turning to autumn, his quill pen was already moving swiftly over the pages, framing those words for which all these careful, dignified men around him were so little prepared. The first notable event of the momentous year of 1776 was to be the publication of *Common Sense*, but so far no man, not even Benjamin Rush, was really aware of what was coming save Thomas Paine himself.

While it seems that little was being accomplished during that summer and autumn of 1775 when party was blocking party, actually the whole character of the American Revolution was being determined, a character far different from those of the revolutions which have followed in its wake. Here were no opened sluice gates for a flood of blood and destruction, no headlong decisions to be deeply regretted by history later. Here every step was taken deliberately, was clearly studied, fairly debated, justified in the eyes of the originators, justified abroad by careful declarations, so that the world at large might go along with them in understanding. By some men the forward advance was thought to be too rapid and too perilous, and they were wrong. By some it was believed to be too slow, and they were wrong also. There was deep wisdom and devotion in the minds and hearts of our founding fathers, but there was no man there who was wise beyond the danger of mistakes. John Adams, fretting, furious, attempting to move the opinion of those whose hearts were set on settlement with Britain, was both right and wrong. "This measure of imbecility" was what he called the second Petition to the King, and laid upon it all the misfortunes of this year and the next. "I have always imputed the loss of Charlestown," he said, "and the men who fell there, and the loss of a hero of more worth than the town—I mean General Warren—to Mr. Dickinson's Petition to the King; the loss of Quebec and Montgomery to his unceasing though finally unavailing efforts against independence."

He speaks with scant justice, though with complete honesty of belief. The delays and difficulties in supporting the army might be laid to the inexperience of executive committees rather than to the willful neglect of the Congress.

"No reason can be assigned for pressing into this measure," said one of the Dickinson party concerning the move for independence, "but the reason of every Madman." He, too, was wrong. But in holding back those who were headlong, in bringing it to pass that they must wait until the whole country was aroused and was convinced of the sacrifices that must be made, in delaying until all were ready to stand by independence to the end, were these cautious ones wholly in error? Not mistaken in their instinct to hold back from impetuous measures, but mistaken in the obstinacy and overcaution by which they delayed matters until it was perilously near to being too late. But until a common wisdom could be found, a principle upon which all could agree, which all could support, there was no hope for the future. The *Pennsylvania Gazette* printed a letter from London saying:

Your committee disputes have been published in all the papers, over and over, and have been disadvantageous to your cause.

The nonintercourse on the part of the colonies had its final confirmation after long warning and preparation. A day in early September had been appointed by the Congress for the last merchant ships to set out for England. "Forty sail went down with this evening's ebb," wrote Christopher Marshall in his diary. They were watched with a strange mixture of emotion as they disappeared down the Delaware into the twilight, leaving the great river empty of that busy commerce which had so long made Philadelphia great. To those who saw them go, the habitual phrase sprang into mind. Could one still say of crossing the Atlantic eastward that it was "going home"?

Early in November came the first news of the fate of the Peti-



tion to the King. "As his Majesty did not receive it on the Throne, no answer would be given," was the equivocal message relayed through the colonial agents by the Secretary of State. This was not the final word in the matter, and there might still be hope through the good offices of Richard Penn, but it could scarcely fail to be a blow to the Dickinson leadership.

By the end of the same month two important committees had been appointed: one for the smuggled importation of arms and ammunition in which the colonies were dangerously lacking, the other for secret correspondence with friends of liberty abroad. John Dickinson was on both of them; John Adams, Samuel Adams, and Richard Henry Lee were on neither. The omission was flagrant and not to be overlooked. Selection of committees was by ballot when the matter was of importance, but often a slate was made up "out of doors" with agreement as to votes prearranged. A short time after the completion of the last, the Committee for Secret Correspondence, one evening young Mr. Jay came to seek out Mr. John Adams at his lodgings, desirous of finding him alone. Jay was by now the acknowledged second in command of the moderate party, he who often moved their proposals after a policy had been discussed and determined. There can be no question but that he came on official business now, even though his approach was that of one man to another.

He revealed frankly that it was true that Mr. Adams had been deliberately kept from the committees, but not because he was a negligible person. He was, in truth, the man for whom all the members of the Congress had the greatest respect. "There is but one thing which prevents your being universally acknowledged to be the first man in the Congress," Jay assured Adams. The great division between the two parties, he explained carefully, was attributed to the obstinate stand of Samuel Adams and Richard Henry Lee. Because of Mr. John Adams's visible intimacy and support of these two, he was being kept from the high place in the Congress which he should have had. Could he

not see how wrong were these others, how idle it was to rouse the jealousy of his fellow members by his adherence to them? It was plain from all that Jay offered that he considered it high time that John Adams should and could ally himself with a different party.

It is a John Adams whom we do not often see who took part in this most private scene. It was known to him that Arthur Lee, in London, had heard some scurrilous accusations concerning Jay's real patriotism, and had relayed them to his brother, who believed them so fully that he had no hesitation in repeating them. Looking across the table at the young man who sat opposite him, John Adams realized how deep a cause he had to feel bitterness—bitterness like his very own. He spoke only with understanding and tolerance as he replied.

He assured Jay that he had little pretension to the place of first man in the Congress. It was "a station of too much responsibility and danger in the times and circumstances in which we live and," he added grimly, "are destined to live." That he should deliberately try for such distinction was unthinkable, for it would be at the cost of friendship. Not only did he have a personal regard for Mr. Samuel Adams, his cousin, and for Mr. Lee, but he "knew them to be able men, and inflexible in the cause of their country." The division now existent in the Congress did not turn on any matter of political appointments or oversights; it arose from a fundamental difference of belief on very great matters—on the question of independence, the question of carrying forward the war to its utmost ends. For the settling of these questions, political adjustments and private arrangements had no part.

The politician who was barely forty and the younger politician who was not yet thirty talked the matter to the end and parted friends. Jay made no more offers of places and positions and finally got up to say good night. He was to become a statesman in

his own right, in time, but that night John Adams was already a great statesman. John Jay walked homeward in the raw air of the December night. He had talked easily of the "first man in the Congress." Was he yet aware that he had just been in his presence?

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## CHAPTER X

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### *Between Hawk and Buzzard*

FOR people who live in the country, whose senses are necessarily alert to changes in the feel of the air, the slant of the sun, and the angle of the wind, there is a certain small, important sound which can never fail to catch their attention. It marks the swinging of the weather vane, a faint, windy creak, audible sometimes above the sound of bees in the garden or, more clearly, in the silence of night on the ridgepole overhead. It can penetrate the most comfortable dreams, to signal to the sleepy householder that here is the expected change to warm spring winds after extended cold, to a cooling draught from the east in hot, dry weather, or a sudden harsh beginning of equinoctial gales. It is interesting to look back upon history and wonder whether we can gauge the instant when the weather vane swung, when the cold, austere blasts of truth and liberty took the place of the varying and pleasant breezes of hope for happy settlement. Difficult as it is for us to divine it, the chance is even smaller that those who were living in the midst of that turmoil of mind were aware of the moment when the change came.

As the year of 1775 merged into 1776, great new matters were taking shape, but the men of Philadelphia were not yet conscious of them. Certainly John Jay was not when he came to offer "the first place in the Congress" to John Adams at the price of forsaking his friends. Nor could John Adams have recognized any such fact, left to drink his cup of lonely bitterness when his young colleague had gone. Bitterness can be a blight or a strong tonic; it was this last for that man of a single determination who in these hard months accepted what came to him, and went

steadily forward. And for a brief time all things seemed to go well with the moderate party in the Congress and of the country of which they felt themselves to be in charge.

The siege of Boston was a campaign thrust upon the country by circumstance, but the plan of an expedition to Canada had been entered upon deliberately not long after the capture of Ticonderoga and Crown Point threw open the way. To rout the British forces there before they could be reinforced, to enlist the sympathy and cooperation of the Canadian inhabitants, would be further proof to the King's government that America could and would support her demands for justice. The good auguries of Ticonderoga seemed well fulfilled as the army, with Schuyler, Montgomery, and Arnold as its commanding officers, pressed northward beyond the lakes and passed into Canada itself.

While the forces under Montgomery and Arnold had been attempting to storm the unknown difficulties of a distant and winter-bound country, while the guns captured at Ticonderoga were being laboriously dragged toward Boston over the ice of the lakes and through trails slashed in snowdrifted forest, one other project of the Congress was coming to the fulfillment of its own destiny, namely, the second Petition to the King. The report in November that "His Majesty did not receive it upon the Throne," was not, for hopeful hearts, to be taken as being the end. The King had laid the other petition before Parliament; this, in the course of legal progress, should have a similar chance for a hearing. Had not Mr. Richard Penn promised that he would see that it came to the attention of the British government? And, in truth, Richard Penn was doing his best.

He had not mustered sufficient influence to get it insistently brought to the attention of the King, but he saw friends and enlisted attention to the extent of his resources. When the document was finally put before the House of Lords he had got access to the visitors' gallery and was, no doubt, entirely aware of the plan which was to be proposed. Discussion became hot at once

over the fact that the King and his ministry were being addressed directly by the American Congress. Could a paper be considered when the powers of government denied the very existence of the body which presented it? Finally it was suggested by the Duke of Richmond that, since he saw Mr. Richard Penn in the audience, the gentleman be asked to come before them to "authenticate the paper" and to answer a few questions concerning the petition and the country from which it came. After a little wrangling it was agreed that there were a number of inquiries which it would be well to put to Mr. Penn and that he should attend next day to answer them. For the first time, one of the Houses of Parliament was to be willing to listen to a fair and truthful account of that legendary gathering, that upstart legislature, that body of rebels which called itself the Continental Congress. Penn's allegiance was wholly with the British government; he was completely for reconciliation, but he was a man of honesty and curiosity and had gathered some real information in Philadelphia. His report next day was one to which the Lords did well to hearken.

Were there abuses and violence in the matter of electing the Congress? he was asked. "I have not heard of any," was his reply.

"Have the Congress persecuted the people?" the Earl of Denbigh inquired. "Not to my knowledge," Penn answered.

Did they have "varying interests in the measures before them?"

They had only one, Penn told the Lords, "a sense of the defense of their liberties."

"Were they not projecting their rebellion for the sole purpose of establishing an independent empire?"

No, he had "never heard one of them breathe sentiments of that nature." They were all men of high honor and intelligence. He was acquainted with nearly all of them and knew that they stood for the country, with the country standing behind them.

Such answers were startling and unwelcome, and the questions began to range more widely.

"How many men, common men, for instance, were capable of bearing arms in the Province of Pennsylvania?"

"About sixty thousand."

"Of those, how many would volunteer to defend their country?"

"All."

The Earl of Sandwich inquired into the nature of that alleged army of twenty thousand who had volunteered in Pennsylvania. He was told, "They are all men of the first character and some fortune."

The Duke of Richmond, carrying on the examination for the friends of America, put his last question. "Did most of the thinking men of Philadelphia understand that the refusal of this petition would be a bar to all reconciliation?"

Penn's reply was definite. That was what they believed. This was their last effort.

Men from the side of the ministry inquired whether the Province of Pennsylvania had given proper consideration of Lord North's offer of conciliation, proposed last year to the separate colonies. Penn told them that the House of Assembly had debated and rejected it "because they would not forsake their sister colonies nor do anything without consulting them."

The Earl of Sandwich asked Penn whether he was fully aware of the legal status of the colonies and how little right they had to be setting up a legislature of their own. To refresh the gentleman's memory, Sandwich repeated to him the words of the Declaratory Act which had accompanied the repeal of the earlier taxation of America by means of stamps. The assertion, he read, was that the colonies

Have been, are, and of right ought to be subordinate unto and dependent upon the imperial Crown and Parliament of Great Britain.

It was a telling phrase as Sandwich rolled it forth, one to remain in the memory—"Are and of right ought to be. . . ."

Penn was excused ; argument waxed hot and plunged into personalities, to be brought back to the matter under debate. To take notice of the petition was to give recognition to the body which had sent it. The petition itself was scored by Lord Dartmouth on the grounds that "the softness of language was purposely adopted to conceal the most traitorous designs." Alas for John Dickinson and his carefully worded statements of loyalty and affection to His Majesty ! It was the final pronouncement of the Lords, as stated by the Earl of Sandwich, that those members of Parliament who were supporting America were only encouraging the "absurd and monstrous claims of our rebellious subjects."

In the House of Commons, Burke presented a ringing speech for composing the differences while there was time. He was answered by Wedderburn at three o'clock in the morning, in a speech that brought the Commons to the edge of their chairs or to their feet. These two giants of debate thundered at each other while the candles burned out and daylight came behind the windows. But Fox and Burke and Conway were voted down and the second petition went the way of the first, to lie forever on the table, unconsidered and unanswered. But this was not to be known in America for some weeks. November was still thought to be a good month, with Washington holding his lines before Boston and with Montgomery marching steadily into the winter of Canada.

There had been some reverses during the last summer but they had been matched by greater satisfactions. Even the defeat of Bunker's Hill was accompanied by the reassuring knowledge that it had, in the end, been of little profit to the British. "Though followed by strong reinforcements (it) had not enlarged the prison of the Ministerial Army by many paces," Richard Henry Lee wrote to Catherine Macaulay in England. And from the more active military front, tidings continued to be all that could be desired. The expedition which was to unite Canada with the rest



of belligerent America was moving well. Chambly had capitulated, the garrison at St. John's surrendered, and on November twenty-eighth came the great news that Montgomery was in possession of Montreal. The next step, and it seemed a simple one, was the capture of Quebec. After that surely the whole of Canada would come over to the American side and the King's government would see the uselessness of denying justice to the colonies. Then negotiations for peaceful settlement could be opened.

But with negotiations what would come then? Such was the question asked by John Adams, who had seen Josiah Quincy's letters from England and undoubtedly read his journal, the only messages which had come back from his mission to England. It was asked by Richard Henry Lee, whose brother was so close and so intelligent a correspondent. Arthur Lee could well bring to his brother's mind all that he might have heard, on his own part, during his schoolboy years in England, of the subtle experience of the King's officers in chicanery, subterfuge, and insidious influence. Could America, untried in such politics, forthright in her desires, and inevitably trustful for lack of disillusioning experience, be any match for such seasoned negotiators as would be sent to treat with her? Letters of warning were coming from those friends in England who still kept up communication, letters unsigned because of the policies of censorship and interception, but always recognizable by their recipients through handwriting or character or loyalty of remembered friendship. In spite of watchful care on the part of the government they kept slipping out, in smaller and smaller numbers, but always speaking the same message. "Give not up, be steady and determined and you will obtain what you want," or "You may rest assured that no accommodation is intended from hence, however you may be amused with pretensions of that sort."

Men in Philadelphia got them, and in Virginia and—less often—in Massachusetts. The happy and confident members of the

Congress paid little attention; it was those who had tasted frustration and disillusionment who listened—Richard Henry Lee and John Adams and Benjamin Franklin. There were continual rumors that commissioners of peace would be sent, rumors which were in themselves a mere “bait for gudgeons.” But decisions were postponed, compromises were effected while the optimistic ones were waiting, ever waiting, for the arrival of the mythical commissioners. Meanwhile military success went forward. Montgomery had joined Arnold before Quebec, after Arnold’s long march from Maine across the Height of Land to reach the St. Lawrence. The details of that journey through the wastelands and the wilderness were still only a vague tale of which no one yet had full information. It was well for the peace of mind of the Congress that no one had. In all that body no one realized how the small force of American troops was getting further and further away from its bases of supply, from communication, from highways of successful withdrawal in case it should be necessary. Washington’s name was receiving high praise, Schuyler’s and Montgomery’s and Arnold’s even higher, for theirs was the most striking success.

Some alterations in the personnel of the Congress were, by this time, contributing to a happier and quieter state of things for both parties, but not necessarily adding to their strength. South Carolina’s delegation was freed of internal dissension, so Thomas Lynch wrote happily to General Schuyler, announcing the departure of Christopher Gadsden to take up military duties in his own colony.

“Business now goes swimmingly, for why? My colleague Gadsden is gone to Command our troops, God save them.”

Thomas Lynch and Arthur Middleton had become admirers of Schuyler through their friendship and association with Robert Livingston. Schuyler was a cousin of the Livingston clan. General Richard Montgomery was Livingston’s brother-in-law. Christopher Gadsden never came back to Philadelphia. His de-

parture was a dismaying loss to the forward men with whom he had been so strongly in agreement.

Whispers went about, at one time, that John Hancock, who had been elected President of the Congress in the place of Peyton Randolph, ought to have given up the position when Randolph returned. But Hancock remained firmly in his place and the whispers came to an end upon the sudden death from a stroke, at a dinner at Mr. Hollis's country house, of that dignified, important, careful man who had presided so ably over the meetings in Carpenters' Hall. The Reverend Jacob Duché preached the funeral sermon with all the members of the Congress present. It had become the custom to ask Duché's eloquence to record the public feeling on such important occasions. Other comings and goings went forward. Edmund Pendleton returned to Virginia and with him went Patrick Henry. Francis Lightfoot Lee, another of the Stratford brothers, came to take the place of the aging Richard Bland. William Whipple had replaced John Sullivan of New Hampshire who had been made a brigadier general. Whipple was equally and unswervingly for war and for liberty, but he was far less of a speaker.

Thomas Cushing had not been returned to the Congress, and his place was taken by Elbridge Gerry, a small, busy, intent man of indefatigable industry in public affairs. With a brief withdrawal through loss of temper, he was to sit henceforth through all the rest of the sessions of the Congress and through the Constitutional Convention. The most important aspect of this particular change was that Gerry agreed firmly with the John-and-Sam Adams policy of moving toward independence. Thereafter Massachusetts, no matter what were the differences in personal opinion among her delegates, could show a definite and consistent front to the world, Gerry and the two Adamses overriding the often divergent and hesitating views of Hancock and Robert Treat Paine. Among the Pennsylvania members, Robert Morris, the most successful and able merchant in Philadelphia, had be-

come a member of the Congress, where his partner, Thomas Willing, was already enrolled.

The first cloud over the sunny weather of continued good news was the report of the treachery of Dr. Benjamin Church. He had once been a most zealous member of the group of Massachusetts patriots which included the Adamses, the Warrens, Josiah Quincy, John Hancock, and James Otis. He had been put in charge of the whole medical service of the army, he had visited Philadelphia and held consultation with the members of the Congress. Samuel Adams wrote to James Warren in June, "Dr. Church left us this morning. I disclosed to him as much as I could consistent with the Injunctions I am under." It was well indeed that Sam Adams was mindful of injunctions to secrecy, for now Church was discovered to be in communication with the enemy. He was taken into custody before he had accomplished much harm, but the realization of how close into their own circle treachery had come was a shocking blow to his friends. They felt for the first time the chill warning of how ugly and how amazing can be some of the aspects of war.

By the time the new year came in, the year of 1776, sufficient news had drifted back to America to make it certain that the second Petition to the King, upon which the moderates had built such hopes, had been utterly rejected by both His Majesty and Parliament. Criticisms of the moderate party began to be heard, and to silence them John Dickinson's friends essayed a trial of strength. On January ninth, James Wilson of Pennsylvania offered the motion that the Congress repudiate, once for all, the idea of separation. He moved for announcement to the colonies of America and to the world at large, that the Congress exonerate itself from the accusation, made in the King's recent speech, that they treasured the intention of declaring themselves independent. The day before he stood up to present his proposal there had occurred a small and little-heralded event, the publication, in Philadelphia, at the printing press of Mr. Robert Bell, of a

modest pamphlet, one of whose parts entitled *Thoughts on the Present State of American Affairs* was to have an entirely unexpected impact upon public opinion.

John Adams and his associates fought the Wilson motion bitterly but could not get a sufficient vote to prevent its being assigned to a certain day for further debate. The pressing necessity of considering the opening of the ports to world trade—excepting Britain's—postponed discussion of the measure a little longer. It cannot be determined now whether Wilson had already perused the pamphlet just issued; certainly the hint of menace to his party which it carried had not yet become generally known. But, although the moderates firmly denied it, matters were moving in a way they did not like, and the voice of James Wilson, proposing his reassurance to the world, comes to us across history edged by a sharp note of misgiving.

There was soon cause for anxiety of a very different kind. Congress had settled down to its busy, sometimes droning routine of daily business. It was issuing money, it was organizing supplies of clothing and food and arms, it was considering the purchase and equipment of armed vessels, activities which were to grow in time into the separate administrations of the Treasury, the Army, and the Navy Departments. Throughout the Revolution all such work was still to lie in the hands of moderate-sized committees, growing more expert and less dismayed by difficulties, as trials were met and faced and struggled through. Every morning at the opening of business, the Secretary read aloud the list of current financial claims which were voted approval or disapproval. On the morning of January seventeenth, 1776, this process had been duly accomplished and was followed by a petition from Dr. Benjamin Church, depicting his "piteous situation" in prison and reiterating his innocence. They had advanced to the sitting of the Committee of the Whole to discuss the great question of the opening of the ports, when there was an interruption. Word came in that there was a courier at the door with dis-

patches from General Schuyler. He was admitted; the session of the Committee of the Whole ended abruptly, while men settled themselves to hear the report from the front read aloud.

The news was from Quebec, and slowly the import of the dreadful sentences spread through the room—Montgomery was dead, Arnold was wounded, young Colonel McPherson with whose father so many of the members had dined at Mount Pleasant—dead also. Colonel Campbell had managed to get the remaining forces away from Quebec; that word constituted the only shred of comfort.

It was the rule that the dispatches from generals at the front were to be discussed the day after they were received. The President ordered these to be laid on the table; the hollow form of returning to business was attempted. Finally the members dispersed; it was hard to believe in such unmitigated disaster when all the news had been so good, so hopeful.

The next day Captain Edward Antill, the officer of Montgomery's own command sent by Schuyler to bring the report, was called into the Congress. He was asked whether he could give a full and firsthand account, which he was well qualified to do. He was with Montgomery when he died. Part of Arnold's command, three or four hundred men, had held out in the Lower Town, but the artillery, with Major Lamb, had been obliged to surrender. Arnold had a leg shattered and had been carried away to a field hospital. Colonel Campbell, who had taken over command and had got away a large part of the forces, had not been able to make them go forward. Young Mr. Aaron Burr had distinguished himself in action. And now, he was asked, what of the Canadians themselves—were they lost to us by this disaster? "They are between hawk and buzzard," Antill said. They would join the Americans if a strong and victorious military force should occupy the country to the exclusion of the British troops.

The question of reinforcements was immediately taken up. There were certain battalions stationed in Philadelphia which

could march at once to the relief of their comrades in Canada. They would travel on foot through Pennsylvania and New Jersey and the Colony of New York, up the Hudson, through Lake Champlain, up the valley of the Sorel River, through wilderness and winter weather, dragging with them what artillery they could manage to move over such difficult terrain, carrying with them such supplies as had been inadequately got together. Men of the Congress talked to each other of courage and hope, but who could shut his eyes to the fact of the weary weeks that must pass, the countless hazards that must be encountered, the small, small measure of aid that could be so carried? How helpless distance made one when coupled with unknown conditions and in a harsh and hostile, an utterly unknown land! Hearts were like lead that day and for many days following. It was not only the loss that weighed upon them, the sympathy for those friends bereaved; it was the sense, beginning to come home at last, of how remote and improbable had really been that project of bringing Canada triumphantly to the American side. But this last was not admitted aloud. Let troops and supplies be ordered to move at once, let Mr. Antill have a lieutenant-colonelcy, let dispatches be sent back with him to tell General Schuyler that the Congress was still supporting the Canadian campaign at all costs.

In the light of modern understanding, won by further generations of a country's military experience, we are aware that success and advance in the field are in direct proportion to supply. Therefore we can wonder little why our forefathers, quite innocent of such knowledge, made such a clumsy job of some of their military strategy. Between the Congress and the northern army there were no roads for much of the distance, there was no system of transport except clumsy, creaking wagons or heavy boats held back by frozen waters. And behind the Congress were no sources of supply.

The iron masters of the furnaces of Pennsylvania were only beginning to learn how to cast cannon; prizes were being offered

for the best processes of producing saltpeter; blankets were procured by "asking the housekeepers each to spare one or two." Before a blanket could be made, or the stuff for a soldier's coat, sheep must be sheared, wool spun on the big wheels by the endless process of walking back and forth, looms had to be rethreaded and reeds changed, and the heavy battens had to thump hour after weary hour as the stout material grew under the weaver's hand. Mr. David Rittenhouse was persuading people that clocks could run by iron weights so that the lead ones could be turned into bullets.

There were only the beginnings of factories to turn out small arms. The family rifle that had hung over the mantelpiece for a generation or more was still the backbone of the Continental Army's equipment, and often it was a matter of family tradition to know its personality and how to load and fire it. Over in France, Monsieur Pierre Samuel du Pont de Nemours was but now a new member of the French government; he had yet to meet the great republican, Mr. Thomas Jefferson, and imbibe from him the idea that America was the place for a man who loved liberty. His son, Eleuthère Irénée du Pont, was a boy of only five, not old enough yet even to dream of those powder mills he was to build on the banks of the Brandywine. Of all the wars in which America, as an independent country, has been engaged, the Revolution is the only one which she fought without the aid of that ingenious family. The difference is sorely noticeable, but the blame for the lack does not lie with the Continental Congress. But superb marksmanship went with the family musket, unquenched hearts beat under the homespun wool of the coats, and a Congress undeterred and undaunted by its own inexperience went steadily on with its work.

A letter of John Hancock's to the Massachusetts Council gives a sufficient summary of the reasons for failure in supply. "The unprepared State of the Colonies on the Commencement of the War, and the almost total Want of every Thing necessary to



carry it on, are the true Sources from whence all our Difficulties have proceeded." And he adds, showing exactly what were John Hancock's politics at that moment, "The fact however furnishes a most striking Proof of the Weakness and Wickedness of those, who charge them (the colonies) with an *original* Intention of withdrawing from the Government of Great Britain and erecting an independent Empire."

It was not until the American Revolution was long over and the record of the debates in Parliament became part of the public domain, that it was revealed to our inexperienced forefathers, struggling with the problems of small arms and medicine, with the purchase of ticklenburgs and lead and Peruvian bark, that they had their opposite numbers in the British administration. To these gentlemen, some of the same problems were equally insoluble, since the supplying of an army on the other side of the Atlantic in the stormy season, the task of organizing contracts for a government already given over to corruption and favoritism, presented their own problems. Men who had enlisted unwillingly in the King's service, with half-suppressed sympathy for the cause of the Americans, found themselves in the field unfed, unsupported, unsupplied with the necessities of existence. According to the criticisms and protests of the opposition in Parliament, according to the letters home of English officers in America, there were times when the British Army, though better clothed, was little less hungry and ill-supplied than were Washington's tattered battalions. They were, obviously, far less hesitant about plundering the country to satisfy their wants. British leaders in the field complained bitterly of the slyness and resource of the American inhabitants in hiding away their produce and provisions, just as the American records of the time speak of certain less than patriotic farmers and merchants who held back their stores from the Continental Army for the sake of selling them to the British for hard money.

On our own part, we see that Washington, in his incessant let-

ters of appeal to the Congress, offered no reproach or hint at dishonesty among the members; he only urged more and more desperate efforts to offset the lacks and the awkwardness of the methods tried. That which promised best, which the Congress finally adopted, strong in the sense of the individuality of colonies, was to lay on each a quota which it was to fill on demand. When we, as posterity, criticize the Congress for its inefficiency in keeping the army supplied, it were well to remember how often the failure lay not at the door of the struggling committee of Congress, but at that of those colonies who had skimped or repudiated or neglected the carrying out of the obligations which they had assumed. All this was to be a long-standing grievance which we have against our forebears who knew so little, in their day, of how to take care of an army.

And on the other side of the struggle, early in 1776, Charles James Fox offered a motion in the House of Commons for censure of the conduct of those administering the American war. Putting aside for the moment the question of the justice of the cause, he said, he would call attention to "such a scene of folly in the Cabinet, servile acquiescence in Parliament, and misconduct and ignorance in office and the field as never before disgraced this nation or indeed any other." He asked for a committee of inquiry into the causes of the ill success of His Majesty's arms, "particularly in relation to fighting and defection in Canada." On both sides of the Atlantic, it seemed, there was scant satisfaction with the manner in which things had moved in the north. The hard-pressed ministry, under the fire of such rough abuse, went on to their own solution of the problem of military needs in America which was to be made public a little later and which was far from earning any higher praise either from their contemporaries or from posterity.

In Philadelphia there was a memorial service for General Montgomery, buried far away in a cold and hostile country. Provost Smith of the College of Philadelphia was asked to de-

liver the address. He was a man known for his grace and eloquence of manner in the pulpit. The Congress marched together with mourning bands on their arms, as they had done for Peyton Randolph, as they were to do soon again for Samuel Ward of Rhode Island. The Assembly of Pennsylvania attended, and a great throng of citizens. The men of the Congress formed a solid group, settled in their pews to hear what words could do for a brave man now lost to them.

Provost Smith's eulogy of Montgomery's skill and courage was all that they could ask. But—what was this which followed it? Was this the flavor of the sermon which they had expected? There seemed no question in the mind of the man speaking from the pulpit that all those grave men in the pews thought as he did, that all of them wished for reconciliation with England above every other thing, that it was their single problem to find a way back to affectionate accord with the mother country. Those who thought with John Dickinson and Jay and Hancock relaxed easily and swam with the tide of his strong sentiment. Those like Richard Henry Lee and the Adamses stiffened in their places in resistance and disagreement. But for those who were not yet determined, who did indeed wish for peace and happy settlement, but who were beginning to see that such was well-nigh impossible—for these the sermon was more than they expected of trimming sails to a fair wind. Was it for this that Montgomery had died so heroically, for the sake of opening negotiations with a ministry of so much greater experience and adroitness than any America could muster, a ministry whose justice they all had such strong reasons to doubt? There were many gentlemen who thought much as Smith when they came in; there were far fewer of them when they went out. The contrast was too great between what he could say and what Richard Montgomery had done. But there was little use to anyone in protracting grief, in talk of a dead man's heroism. There was now greater work than ever to do and they must all go forward.

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## CHAPTER XI

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### *George Merchant*

THE pamphlet published at Robert Bell's printing shop was not signed with the writer's name; the author did not even call himself a Publius or an Amicus of classical flavor, but instead identified the paper only by the simple phrase, *Common Sense*. For a little time, interest in the pamphlet itself marched ahead of speculation as to the writer. Men were reading it everywhere: on the street as they walked home from purchasing it; members of the Congress perused it at their desks instead of listening to James Wilson and John Dickinson describe the friendship that really existed between England and America. While the authorship was still a mystery, people began to attribute it to John Adams or to Benjamin Franklin. For the first few days no one looked for the inconspicuous journalist in a shabby coat who had been making himself so precarious a living by writing articles on every sort of subject in the Philadelphia journals. The secret of authorship was not long kept, and Thomas Paine emerged as the most talked-of writer of the day. He was soon to become a volunteer in Washington's army, but he was not to be suffered to lay aside his pen.

John Adams said of *Common Sense*, "The arguments in favor of independence I liked very well." It was no very warm approbation, but it was cool for a reason. Adams's eye went immediately to that part of Paine's work which gave in brief outline his idea of a proper government for America. All the proposals therein filled the gentleman from Massachusetts with horror. Adams, besides being so stouthearted a revolutionist, was, at the same time, a deep student of the principles of good

government, and he was shocked even by the radical views of his cousin Samuel, who would have supported, if necessary, a weak executive and a single legislative chamber under the belief that this would constitute practical democracy. For Paine's suggested system of government he had nothing but such severe criticism that Paine himself was finally led to expostulate with him. John Adams had, more or less independently, matured a plan of government over which he had many times consulted with Richard Henry Lee. Under Lee's insistence this had been published without a signature and with the modest title, *Thoughts on Government in a Letter from a Gentleman to a Friend*.

Tom Paine sought out Adams at his lodgings, to point out that the Adams pamphlet was undermining the influence of his own suggestions on a form of government. That, rejoined Adams coolly, was exactly what he hoped would be the case, for he thought Paine on government quite unsound. They confronted each other across the table, two men of no great stature—except in historical significance—the one big-nosed and thin-lipped, already bent with a writer's stoop, the other round of countenance and square of shoulders. Both had been called violent by their adversaries; both were great men, each in his own way. But that gave them small matter to hold in common. Leaving politics as a question on which they could not agree, Adams went on to contest certain of Paine's criticisms of the Old Testament. He was astonished to hear to what lengths this bold thinker would go in condemning what practically all men of that age revered completely as Holy Writ. "I have some thoughts of publishing my thoughts on religion, but I believe it will be best to postpone it to the latter part of my life," Adams quotes Paine as saying. It is interesting to observe that John Adams's searching mind immediately took note of that portion of Paine's mental make-up which was to bring him into such disrepute later, when the *Age of Reason* so vastly offended even liberal thinkers and when Tom Paine's quarrel with the Bible finally came out into open combat.

In spite of Adams's damnation by faint praise, *Common Sense* immediately became the talk of Philadelphia, of the colony, of the country. Members enclosed copies of the pamphlet in their letters to constituents at home, so that in the briefest time it had spread from New England to Georgia. That word "independence," which so far had been whispered only in the most private colloquy, against which there had been the most ironclad taboos, was now suddenly on all lips. The conservatives, like comfortable barnyard fowl dozing in the twilight of pleasant possibility, of looking forward to a safe return to the arms of England, had thought that such comfortable hopes need never be interrupted. Then, suddenly, here was this upstart Chanticleer with clarion voice, saluting the morning of liberty. Independence? exclaimed *Common Sense*. It is right, it is timely, it is inevitable. "I challenge the warmest advocate of reconciliation to show a single advantage that this continent can reap by being connected with Great Britain." Perished completely was the Frankford advice, the cautious counsels, the warnings. They were all at an end, and independence was, at last, an open and living issue. Whether it survived or perished, it confronted the men of Philadelphia as something with which, now, they were bound to reckon.

In the eyes of John Adams, however, the pamphlet was little short of a calamity. The force of violent truth blew like a March wind through the minds of all men, slamming the shutters or shaking the dust and cobwebs from the rafters of the most private mental dwelling places. But this was not, so Adams thought, a moment for crude and violent tactics. His own progress forward, determined as it had been, was discreet, careful, unostentatious. And he and his two closest associates had come, just at this time, to the most delicate and intricate stage of their negotiations.

To them it was plain, as John Adams had sketched in the letter to Warren which had proved such a bombshell, that there were three objects which should always be clear before the Congress,

and that they should move on together. "Early and late" so he recorded, he preached the doctrine of the threefold duty of which no one was to lose sight. There must be independence, there must be foreign alliances, there must be a confederation of the colonies into united and permanent government. Of these, independence was the first and paramount issue; the others would be possible only when independence was achieved. But one must not greatly outstrip the other; independence without provisions for solid government in the colonies would be disastrous, nor could independence stand long without recognition and aid of other countries. *Common Sense* offered no idea as to how cool and considered, how perfectly balanced every move must be toward the proper end.

Samuel Adams and Richard Henry Lee had left largely to John Adams the adroit steering of their project through these shoal and dangerous waters. In spite of certain shortcomings in personal character, in spite of a later showing of weakness as an executive in the office of President, John Adams must forever have credit for his insight, his vision, and his steady courage in this critical moment of his country's history. He could assume patience when he must, and he assumed it now. He had been accused of violence, but now, like Agag, he was walking delicately.

As for the moderates, they closed their ears against all the tumult aroused by Paine. This was the voice of the rabble, they said, not the voice of reason. They were in the Congress to exert the authority of higher wisdom; they would go on their way unaffected by this unseemly storm which had risen about them but which would presently blow away. All the more they must hold to their position and make it clear before the world. Late in January they brought to a vote James Wilson's proposal repudiating independence, and carried it. The committee chosen to draw up the declaration against separation left no doubt as to what the tone of the document would be. It comprised, besides James Wilson of Pennsylvania, John Dickinson, James Duane of New

York, Robert Alexander of Maryland—who, a little later, was to go over to the British—and William Hooper of North Carolina, whom Thomas Jefferson later characterized as the greatest Tory in Congress. The committee represented three colonies which were firmly against independence and a fourth with a divided delegation, North Carolina. No man among his colleagues was stronger for reunion with Britain than William Hooper.

In a month they brought in their report and presented it for approval. "We are accused of carrying on war 'for the purpose of establishing an independent Empire,'" the document read. "We disavow the Intention." It was couched in the language of James Wilson. The vigor with which the paper denounced the idea of separation canceled an effect which the final statement might have achieved. "Our first wish is that America shall be free." It was read aloud, thought to be somewhat wanting in force of expression, and laid upon the table for an appointed second reading. The violent party had assailed it, but without success.

On the twenty-first of February, William Livingston offered a motion that "The Thanks of Congress be given to Dr. Smith for his Oration on General Montgomery and that he be desired to make it public." Members from New York and Pennsylvania supported the proposal, vehemently resisted by John Adams, Chase of Maryland, and Edward Rutledge of South Carolina. These last argued that the address pictured the sentiments of the Congress as being desirous "to continue in a dependency of Great Britain, which doctrine this Congress cannot now approve." Livingston, seeing that the motion would be lost, had the wisdom to withdraw it, leaving the Reverend William Smith to publish his sermon on his own responsibility. It was a mild but definite reverse for the moderate party. It showed Adams supported by Samuel Chase, who had been undecided in opinion on other occasions, but was to be an open ally from this time



forward. It also showed Edward Rutledge aligned with John Adams and not with the members from New York and Pennsylvania whose ideas he had so often espoused.

Things had changed in the course of a month and the report repudiating independence did not raise its head again. The handful of violent men was beginning to be a respectable majority, was beginning to exercise power instead of being consistently voted down. All this political balancing of forces was attended, from day to day and from week to week, with assiduous consideration of military affairs. Matters in Canada were causing grave anxiety; it was beginning to be suggested that a commission be sent thither to get information and to attempt, directly and personally, to enlist Canadian sympathy.

The first session of the Congress, it will be recalled, had sent out an address to the Inhabitants of Quebec. It had been translated and dispatched to be broadcast among the people, with the hope of rousing their interest in the plight of the other English colonies. But it had been written too soon after Parliament's Quebec Act, by which western territories acquired in the last war were annexed to Quebec, the Roman Catholic province, instead of to the British colonies of the seaboard. Resentment against Parliament's act certainly colored the message to the people of Canada. Later, as months passed, there was surprise expressed over the lack of response to this effort, until it was finally pointed out to members of the Congress that the publication of the address was having little effect because most of the habitants at whom it was aimed were unable to read. Public news was read to them by their priests, it was explained, and, since the message from Philadelphia was so palpably a Protestant document, the good offices of these intermediaries were understandably doubtful. In February of 1776 it was decided to send three commissioners to Canada, to reach the people if possible and to consult with the generals in the field as to the military necessities of the situation. For such a mission who, for first choice, could be more

appropriate than Benjamin Franklin? He was an old man, it was true, and already in impaired health, still wearied out from the bitter political battle he had so long carried on in England. These drawbacks did not affect the matter of choice, nor did they affect Franklin's acceptance of the responsibility. Franklin was a born diplomat; he was known everywhere for his scholarly attainments; he was a master of the French language. He was the man to carry such an attempt to success if anyone could. He unhesitatingly agreed to take the long, arduous journey into a country where it was still winter, over a road which had been difficult even for the young strength and courage of a marching army.

With him were to go two men from the Colony of Maryland, this being the province prevailingly Catholic, so that the commissioners sent from there might most easily get a hearing from the Canadians. Samuel Chase was thirty-five years old, less than half Franklin's age, a virile, able lawyer with a ruddy, open countenance and a direct heartiness which was most engaging. He was not good in debate, and seems to have had, at first, some changes of mind, but as John Adams said of him, he "was generally with us." He was to do better than that at a very critical moment. The other commissioner was Charles Carroll of Carrollton, a young man from Maryland possessed of what was reputed to be, in actuality and in prospect, the largest fortune in America, bar none, not even John Hancock's. There were experts in Philadelphia who knew, by some indirect method of calculation, how to estimate any man's assets down to the last pound. Carroll was not a member of the Congress, but so great was his interest in their deliberations that he spent much time in Philadelphia and was known to most of the members. His abilities and his sound worth, along with his being a Roman Catholic, led the Congress to appoint him a commissioner and to urge his cousin, Father John Carroll—afterwards the first American archbishop—to go with them. It is gratifying and touching to learn what efforts these younger men made to take care of Franklin. It was actually

the assiduity of John Carroll, who came home with him before the rest, which made it possible that Benjamin Franklin came home at all.

They set out in March. There was a period of silence as they toiled northward over a journey of which long stretches were on horseback, then in open boats battling through the half-frozen waters of Lake Champlain, then another painful overland stretch in calèches to Montreal. When letters began to come back they were of more and more disturbing import. They were read in the Congress, commented on with anxious and worried haste, then put aside to wait until a full and complete report should arrive.

On the very day in March that they set out northward, better tidings came in from another quarter. Washington had received the heavy guns brought from Ticonderoga and had for some time been making ready to use them in the siege of Boston. Letters were received from the General announcing that, after Dorchester Heights had been fortified, the British had evacuated the city, had set sail with all the troops and were reported to be withdrawing to Halifax. Such news relieved anxious hearts and gave a sudden air of cheerfulness to proceedings which had dragged for weeks in heavy despondency. With renewed spirit, the Congress plunged into matters of growing difficulty and importance.

A year before, the Colony of Massachusetts, finding that her new governor had arrived at the head of an invading army, had repudiated him and the other royal officers and had asked the advice of the Congress on a proper method of procedure. She had been counseled that the royal governor and lieutenant be "considered as absent" and that a temporary assembly and council be elected to act until royal officers could be found who would administer the colony according to her proper charter. Massachusetts, in due time, set up her own system and, in reorganizing her judiciary, appointed John Adams as Chief Justice. In the spring of 1776 it began to be discussed "out of doors" in Philadelphia whether all the colonies had not better forestall such a

crisis in their affairs and set about forming, in concert, new governments of their own. In Virginia, particularly, the old order was gone and Governor Dunmore was openly in arms against his colony. Here preparations were well in order, and John Adams's pamphlet, *Thoughts on Government*, was being passed from hand to hand. In April, the Congress finally decided to open all the ports to trade other than with England, in order to restore the country's prosperity. That source of debate once out of the way, John Adams prepared to set in motion the first and most pressing item in his program of forward progress. On May tenth, Richard Henry Lee presented to the Congress a resolution that all colonies be recommended to set about the immediate forming of "such governments as shall, in the opinion of the representatives of the people, best conduce to the happiness and safety of their constituents in particular and America in general."

A few colonies had already done so. But to a certain group of provinces, close in both geography and in ideas, the plan was bitterly repugnant. "The proprietary colonies do certainly obstruct and perplex the American Machine," Richard Henry Lee observed in a letter to General Charles Lee. British governors were still functioning comfortably in Pennsylvania and Delaware, New Jersey and Maryland, the colonies which had come into being by a royal grant from the Throne and whose charters had been framed accordingly. The power of the Governors Penn, William Franklin, and Eden was to last very little longer, but of this fact there was not yet much evidence. There was fierce resentment amongst these four provinces against the so-called interference of the Congress in their internal affairs, but nevertheless the Lee-Adams motion was passed. When finally drawn up it was preceded by a preamble which set forth the reasons for taking such a step and the purposes it was to achieve. To this there was even more indignant resistance. John Adams, Lee, and Edward Rutledge were the committee for the preamble. Its wording, mostly the work of John Adams, left no shred of doubt as

to the degree of separation between the new governments and the old. The necessity for government was apparent and in most cases accepted, but the sentiment of the preamble, completely hostile as it was to the old British rule, was bitterly contested, James Duane for New York and James Wilson for Pennsylvania leading the opposition. Protest, however, was unavailing, and on May fifteenth the approval of the preamble was passed. James Duane declared bitterly to Adams that "It was a machine for fabricating independence."

"I think it is independence," Adams told him with satisfaction, "but we must have it with more formality yet."

Nonetheless, the moderate party was not completely worsted. They had in reserve a certain piece of political heavy artillery which they proposed to train upon John Adams direct. It had been ready for some time; now was the occasion for bringing it into action. John Dickinson would not speak to him; others suspected and opposed his every move. It remained for a certain member from Maryland whom Adams has deliberately refrained from naming, to make a move to annihilate him entirely.

The means had been prepared months before. In December of 1775, the delegates from Maryland, not liking the direction in which certain matters were moving, had written to their Assembly for more specific instructions as to their procedure in case certain contingencies arose. It is obvious that they offered some hints, as delegates often did, as to what directions they would prefer to receive. No ordinary Assembly could have provided, unaided, for such special conditions as the Maryland body presently enumerated. Earlier, they had told their delegates that Maryland would feel herself bound by the majority decisions of the Congress. Now, however, they stated that the Colony of Maryland refused to be held to any policy of the Congress which had not already been approved at home. They stated definitely their opposition to independence, to a confederation, and to foreign alliances. If any such measure were to pass, the delegates

were to leave the Congress at once and come home for consultation. The last paragraph of the new instructions presented something quite unheard of in specifications to delegates. They were to try to carry a motion through the Congress to the effect that any person who held office in the army or had a gainful position in any of the newly organized colonial governments should be denied the right to a seat in the Congress. As has been said, when Massachusetts set her affairs in constitutional order she had bestowed upon John Adams the position of Chief Justice. The new Assembly, still called the General Court, insisted that along with this, he should nevertheless return to his place in the Congress. In due and chosen time, since the Adams and Lee party seemed to be pressing forward to dangerous power, the delegates from Maryland had their instructions read aloud before the members, and a certain one of them moved for the resolution recommended last, namely, that no person holding office in a colony should be eligible for the Congress. There could be no doubt in even the densest mind that the proposal was aimed at ejecting John Adams from that distinguished company.

"A person holding office at home is an interested party," so the Maryland delegate explained, and so should be excluded from the higher legislature. He was voicing, in thinly veiled terms, the whispers which had been circulated to the effect that John Adams wanted independence because it would assure his high and lucrative office in his own colony.

No one can say that John Adams ever failed in courage or in readiness of reply. As he heard the proposal and saw eyes meeting and significant glances exchanged, he was neither alarmed nor angry, but was filled with the exalted joy of one who has a supreme opportunity and is going to make the most of it. He stood up to say that he would readily second the motion made by the gentleman from Maryland, but would stipulate that his worthy colleague should, similarly, join him in a corresponding proposal. This was that no person who held office in the old, the

royal government, should be eligible for the Congress, since he, in even greater measure, might be considered an interested party.

Every person in the big room sat up, alert, shocked, and—a number—delighted. For the gentleman from Maryland had held high office by appointment of the British government and had never resigned it. Independence, for him, would be a reversal of fortune which he obviously neither desired nor expected. Charles Thomson, whose Irish spirit responded always to the absurd, was “in raptures.” He had heard the whispering campaign against Adams and knew what was the plan to discredit him. But John Adams now put aside humor as a weapon and went forward to the plain truth. “The office of Chief Justice of Massachusetts,” he was explaining, was “a position of such responsibility and danger” that he had not felt himself justified in refusing it. That last comment was heard by the Congress with sobering faces. Those who were informed knew that, while there had been threats by the King’s government concerning punishment of disloyal subjects, alternated with offers of clemency in case of capitulation, there was an ironclad reservation in the case of John Adams, that for him there would be no mercy. “Profits, honors, power, or pleasure,” Adams was going on, were scarcely the lot of a man who was serving the American cause, but “labor, danger, and death, very likely disgrace and infamy” were his far more probable fate. He sat down quietly, and the proposal to disqualify him went no further. Charles Thomson put aside his scratched notes. This was one of the lost motions of which no record was to be entered in the Journals. But no one, from that day forward, ever made the mistake of thinking that John Adams was, politically speaking, small game. There would be little use now in advising him to be silent.

It seemed, for a little time, as though both parties might for a moment pause and draw breath. In the military field the antagonists were resting on their arms. The British had, indeed, retired to Halifax and there remained unmoving, although it was

plain that they were quite able to sally forth to a new attack at any desired moment. The Congress was waiting for word from the committee sent to Canada, but no complete report had yet been made. There walked again the phantom of the idea that commissioners would be sent from England to open negotiations concerning political grievances. Discussion even began as to what sort of passports should be issued to them. The Adams-Lee party commented dryly that this was a matter that could easily be settled after they had been asked for. Skies were lowering, but it seemed possible that this was the moment when they might begin to clear. Then suddenly there came a thunderclap, a flash of knowledge that here was no point for pausing, here was the urgent necessity to press on with desperate haste.

Far back, in March of 1775, it will be remembered, a vote was taken in the House of Commons to support the King's declaration that his colonies were in a state of rebellion. The man who spoke last in that debate was an alderman of London who declared that he had no desire to pledge his life and fortune in support of any such cause, even though it were the King's. Alderman Sawbridge was moved neither by cowardice nor parsimony to make this statement, as he now proved by risking both life and fortune on the opposite side. He hazarded a great stake politically also, since he was now Lord Mayor of London in the place of Wilkes. His path crossed that of a forgotten and humble but still very important American, with startling results upon the slowly moving sessions of the American Congress.

George Merchant, a Virginian, had enlisted in Daniel Morgan's rifle corps at the beginning of the war and had marched with him to Cambridge, had been transported by sea to the Kennebec, and had gone with Arnold on that incredible journey through the wilderness to Quebec. There was to be, for Merchant, no reward of glory or even the excitement of battle, for he was captured as they crossed the St. Lawrence, condemned to death by his captors, and sent to England in fetters for execution.



Sawbridge heard of his being in a London gaol and went to see him to inquire into the nature of his condemnation. Using his power as a magistrate, he had the man sent to Bristol where, among Edmund Burke's constituents, there was a strong group of citizens who were as earnest for America as were the merchants of London. George Merchant therefore fell into the hands of friends who managed to get him out of Bristol on a trading ship bound for Halifax. That much they could do for him; but once there he would have to shift for himself.

It was well known on both sides of the water that the ministry's system of censorship and interception was growing so efficient that very little real information was getting across the Atlantic. There had been reports of the King's being in process of treating for soldiers with some of the German princes, but there was no information as to what the direct fulfillment of the negotiations would be. Therefore, when Sawbridge and the men of Bristol dispatched Merchant in the direction of his own country, they saw to it that he carried, sewed in the waistband of his breeches, letters and newspapers giving a statement of the true and very pressing facts of the situation. The letters were from Arthur Lee. So well had Merchant accomplished the concealment that, though he was searched more than once, the papers he bore never came to light.

On arrival in Halifax he found conditions in such confusion that an inconspicuous man could contrive to make his way about without much comment. The British troops, restless after their repulse at Boston and so badly supplied that they were suffering much discomfort from want of food, were not much in the mood for watchfulness or discipline. Merchant fell in with a group of masters of American ships who had been taken with their vessels and brought as prisoners to Halifax. Under the noses of indifferent officers and grumbling men they got possession of a small fishing schooner and put to sea.

It was their intention to land at Portsmouth, New Hampshire,

but violent winds assailed them and they were glad to make port at York some miles to the north. The Committee of Correspondence at York sent Merchant on at once to the New Hampshire committee at Portsmouth, where he happened to fall in with John Langdon, member of Congress from New Hampshire, to whom he confided, for the first time, what his errand really was. Langdon sent him immediately to General Washington, now at New York.

Washington, after the briefest examination of the letters, made instant arrangements to send the man on to the Congress. In view of the "important consequences" which the General immediately foresaw, he arranged to dispatch General Gates the following day to appear before the Congress and give any additional information which might be needed.

Merchant arrived late in the evening of May twenty-third at the London Coffee House, where all roads into Philadelphia seemed to end. He was brought into the Congress next morning and his letters read. The information was brief, definite, and absolutely beyond doubt. The King was preparing to send an army of thirty thousand to America by June. General Burgoyne was to be given ten thousand men for the recapture of Canada. Cornwallis was to invade Virginia and march north to capture Philadelphia. New York was to be taken and a wedge driven between north and south. Burgoyne, coming down from Canada by the lakes and the Hudson River, was to cut off New England.

The kind and quality of the army was a further source of dismay. Englishmen would not volunteer, nor would they fight with good hearts against other Englishmen. Only now was America to be made fully aware of the extent to which foreign troops were to be sent against them. "The English and Irish troops go with infinite reluctance," Arthur Lee's letters reported, "and strong guards are obliged to be kept upon the transports to keep them from deserting wholesale." But instead of them were those other soldiers, well trained and utterly impersonal in the conduct

of war. "Hessians twelve thousand," Lee gave the figures; "Brunswickers, Woelfenbutlers, and Waldeckers, five thousand." It might be said for King George that these were not foreign troops to him, but only the retainers of his good friends and kinsmen who could be called on at any time to help settle disputes in which a crowned head had got himself involved. Yet there was a significance in the Teutonic obstinacy of that short-sighted policy that could well seem more dismaying to the Congress than the actual arrival of the Hessians and Brunswickers themselves. The treasured conception of a benevolent sovereign, misled by his ministers but still open to possible reasoning, must be abandoned forever.

In addition, the very weight and number of this army of foreign invasion was beyond anything they had contemplated. It would be formidable in character to many Americans for its entire strangeness, and to the Germans of Pennsylvania it was all too familiar by tradition and legend. There were enough stories of the rights of pillage for a conquering army, enough whispered tales of atrocities perpetrated by these docile and harshly disciplined soldiers, to make the stoutest hearts falter. The prospect went far beyond what any man there had ever believed America would be called upon to face. Nevertheless, it was a grim reality which must now be encountered.

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## CHAPTER XII

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### *Richard Henry Lee*

WAR is so unnatural and brutal a phenomenon that civilized people who have been at peace for a generation cannot really imagine it. Except for the members from Massachusetts, except for George Washington, whose experience had been early and bitter, there were few men in the Congress who had much firsthand knowledge of war. It is doubtful whether, until that moment, they had really taken in what war with England could prove to be. Much that had been beyond visualization before was startlingly clear now—the definite news of a great army, of a carefully evolved plan for the destruction of American resistance. Along with this came the violent realization that the British forces as now constituted could land practically anywhere upon the American coast that they desired, could take any city, could march at will upon Philadelphia. More than a few members of the Congress had left their households alone, a wife and group of children with only the help and support of servants, in regions that would easily be in the path of the advancing British. Smiling acres, broad-chimneyed houses, ships at their wharves—all could be envisioned as lying directly in the path of the oncoming enemy. It was one thing to contemplate losing those, but it was something different to consider women unprotected and without aid, to think of the possible treachery or cowardice of servingmen, to picture children lost and fleeing with clouds of smoke and flame going up behind them. A war actually begins, for every individual, at the day and hour when its reality comes home to him. For many, one can be sure, the War of the Revolution really began on the day when Merchant's dispatches were read aloud in the Congress.

There was no time lost in indecision. A message was sent at once to General Washington that the presence of Gates was not enough and that he must come himself to consult over the approaching campaign. There had been one phrase of great emphasis in the Arthur Lee letters— "Much was being hazarded upon this one great effort of the British." The campaign of a single season was meant to be conclusive, "since it is hardly possible that this country can stand another." There was hope as well as extremity here. Only General Washington's cool judgment could cope with such a situation.

All this was important, acute, and terrifying, but along with it was the immediate question in every man's mind: what effect does this news have upon the matter of independence? It was natural that, as men of opposite sides differed completely in their approach to the problem, so now did they differ diametrically in their reaction to the affair of the moment. Those who hoped for compromise, for treating with England and adjustment by negotiation, were all the more sure that now every final effort must be put forward for peace, no move should be made to arouse further His Majesty's menacing government. Those on the other side maintained that a country could scarcely be rated as a dependency against which an army of thirty thousand was advancing. Independence was here; why not realize it? why not glory in it? The effect of the tidings was not only to stir the committees to more positive action, to send men sleepless to bed considering ways and means military and financial, but it was to stress the necessity of speed, utmost speed in all their measures. If independence could be voted now, before the British landed, it was possible to achieve it. Could anyone hope that it could be carried in the very face of an army marching to Philadelphia? How much time was there? The whole question turned on that.

The Commander-in-Chief arrived. He had left word with General Ward that tidings were to be sent to him the moment

it was actually ascertained that the British were about to land at New York. Post horses for such a message were to be arranged for, but he did not want to be recalled to the army until the business of the Congress was completed. He observed at once that the uncertainty concerning the fate of independence was clogging the deliberations. As for him, he was now convinced. "We have no more to expect from the justice of England," he declared. And concerning those few who still held the illusory hope that England was going to send the much-talked-of negotiators for peace, he observed, in a letter to his brother at Williamsburg, "I am satisfied that no Commissioners were ever designed, except Hessians." He had gone far since the evening when he waited on John Adams to ask for reassurance concerning separation. And there were others who were moving with him, but not yet enough of them.

The sum of the letters from the commissioners to Canada were now beginning to add up to a completed picture. Benjamin Franklin, when only halfway over the perilous road, wrote a letter in April to his old friend, Josiah Quincy Sr., at Braintree. With this man he had in common the deep grief over a young spirit which had promised so much, "whose loss I shall ever deplore with you," wrote Franklin. But he spoke further with unperturbed and cheerful frankness.

"I begin to apprehend that I have undertaken a fatigue that at my time of life may prove too much for me, and I sit down to write to a few friends by way of farewell." There was no solemnity of leave-taking, however, only an effort to answer letters long unacknowledged, and a faintly disrespectful account of the doings of the Congress for whose most important measure there was nothing wanting now but "general consent." "The novelty of the thing deters some, the doubt of success, others, the vain hope of reconciliation, many." But none of these elements of doubt had any weight with Franklin. In the wilds of the far north, face to face with the appalling facts as to the hazards and inepti-

tudes that went with the Canadian campaign, he was still quietly and determinedly for independence.

In the letters sent to the Congress by the commissioners the revelations were appalling. In spite of Montgomery's death, the members had been letting themselves believe still that there was a possibility of drawing Canada into their orbit. They discovered now how many things were contributing to complete failure of every plan there. The Americans had made various promises, they had bought on credit and had been entirely unable to discharge their obligations. When the soldiers were nearly starving they had requisitioned food for which they could in no way render payment. The whole population was set against them. The cause of the colonies was not even in so good a case as being "between hawk and buzzard," as Antill had described it three months earlier. Nothing but a substantial sum in hard cash would ever prevail against the settled hostility of the disillusioned Canadians.

"Even a cart cannot be procured without ready money or force."

Benjamin Franklin, who always seemed to have pockets full of gold and silver for necessary occasions, had facilitated not only their own movements but those of army supplies by producing cash at critical moments. But to even this there must soon be an end. Besides the news of the economic situation among the sullen and ill-provided habitants, there was also a sorry account of the military aspect of American affairs. The troops were in want of literally everything—bread, boots, guns, powder. Those who had retreated from Quebec had lost all their baggage; what little was left to the army was "plundered by those whose enlistments were out and who were returning to America." There was, in fact, little or no discipline among the troops nor any heart to go forward. "From the present appearance of things," the commissioners concluded in a series of blunt bulletins which spared the Congress nothing, "it is very probable we

shall be under the necessity of abandoning Canada, at least all except the part that lies on the Sorel"—in other words, all but the very gateway of invasion for America.

They announced in a letter to Schuyler, "A further reinforcement will only increase our distress."

This last, relayed to the Congress, was a most dismaying report. No one had realized that while a small army without food and ammunition is helpless, its situation is less desperate than that of a larger one. In one of the letters from Chase and Carroll was contained the most sinister sentence the Congress had yet heard. "Men with arms in their hands will not starve when provisions can be obtained by force." One more illusion was dispelled when the members heard how, when the last troops fell back from Quebec, half starved, riddled with smallpox, "the retreat, or rather flight, was made with the utmost precipitation and confusion." "At a council of war at Deschambault it was decided to retreat to the mouth of the Sorel." A communication as to the commissioners themselves stated :

"We are afraid it will not be in our power to render our country any further services in this Colony."

This was the diplomatic mission headed by Franklin at the risk of his life, to persuade the Canadians to join hands with the other colonies. The time for persuasion, even the time for further fighting, was at an end. All this news was coming in along with the tidings of the approaching British invasion. On the day that Washington arrived in Philadelphia, Hancock was writing to Schuyler that he was sending him sixteen hundred pounds and had completely emptied the treasury of hard money. The Congress, with its very habitation threatened, did not lose sight of the army which it had dispatched so hopefully into the northern wilderness.

Yet it was not the May Resolution concerning new governments, nor the impending advent of the British invasion, nor the disastrous truths about Canada that made up all of what was to



move the Congress so thoroughly during that single month. There was one other event. On the very day the May Resolutions were completed, there was completed also in a colonial convention a resolve which was to be the great step beyond uncertainty, which was to lead into the reality of America's destiny. In Virginia there had been minor military activity for many months, a petty ravaging of her coasts under the direction of her belligerent royal governor, Dunmore, in his "piratical war," with the aid of more and more reenforcement from his countrymen across the seas. With British ships off the Virginia capes and scouting in Chesapeake Bay, with Norfolk burned and other ports threatened with destruction, the Virginia Convention met on the sixth of May, 1776, at Williamsburg, to deliberate on various important matters, notably to establish their own constitution. The House of Burgesses, like other colonial Assemblies of the royal régime, had been superseded by a more democratically chosen body, with representatives from each county meeting. Most of the county gatherings sent their delegates with specific instructions as to policies to be pursued. Cumberland County in Virginia, for instance, had told their representatives "positively to declare for independence; that you solemnly adjure allegiance to His Britanick Majesty, and bid him good night forever." Three days before the Convention opened, the old House of Burgesses met at the Capitol, voted that they could no longer call themselves a legal body, and dissolved their organization forever. Most of the same men reappeared as members of the Convention, having been duly elected under the new system. Peyton Randolph was not there to preside, but Edmund Pendleton sat with dignity and ability in the President's chair.

"The administration of justice and almost all the powers of government have now been suspended for near two years," Pendleton said in his opening address. It was time that they took the necessary steps for their own defense and regulation.

It was a distinguished assembling of talent, even though some

of Virginia's most able leaders were still in Philadelphia and one man was lost to them forever. Edmund Pendleton was second only to Peyton Randolph in honor and prestige, conservative like him, farseeing and courageous like him, worthy to occupy the chief place. Richard Henry Lee and his brother, Francis Lightfoot, were in the Congress, but their older brother, Thomas Ludwell, was a delegate from Stratford, while another Henry Lee and another Richard Lee were there from Prince William and Westmoreland Counties. For Westmoreland there sat, also, General Washington's brother, John Augustine. Benjamin Harrison and George Wythe, still in Philadelphia, had substitutes here. Thomas Nelson was the only one of the Virginia delegation to Philadelphia who was actually present at the opening of the Convention, although Richard Henry Lee was to arrive later. Unhappy circumstances seemed to dog the path of Richard Henry Lee, nor was this occasion any exception. Patrick Henry was there and Richard Bland, ex-members of the Congress like Edmund Pendleton. There was also a future member of the Congress, a small, quiet, very young man, making his first political appearance at Williamsburg, practically unknown although he had a few friends who addressed him as Jemmy Madison. And there was George Mason of Fairfax County, Washington's neighbor, a statesman whose voice was heard in Virginia's councils throughout the Revolution but who did not appear at Philadelphia until much later. He accompanied Madison to the Constitutional Convention and reaffirmed his irascibility, his independence of spirit, and his affinity for minorities by refusing to sign.

There were some dull and early sessions at the Virginia Capitol, getting through small business while great matters were in preparation. Williamsburg was all their own now; there were no more meetings at the Raleigh Tavern except for unofficial and social matters. There was even a committee going through the abandoned Governor's Palace to decide what was needed to put

it in order for the new governor which the Convention was to elect. The little matters were got through with: the decisions to free certain Negro slaves from jail so that they might work at making saltpeter, the disposition of persons suspected of too strong loyalty to the King, the appointment of officers for the Virginia troops, and the setting up of a powder mill at Williamsburg. By May fifteenth the important piece of business was ready, taking precedence even over the consideration of a constitution and the selection of a governor. On the same day that John Adams and Richard Henry Lee saw their preamble—which completed and made competent the May Resolutions—pass through the Congress the Convention at Williamsburg brought in their resolutions and laid them before a committee of the whole. They were offered by Thomas Nelson and supported, after a little earlier hesitation, by Patrick Henry, whose old eloquence flamed up into “a pillar of fire” as he spoke. The conservatives were represented in the dignified and careful opening statement:

Forasmuch as all the endeavours of the United Colonies, by the most decent representations and petitions to the King and Parliament—

Thus was offered a tribute to John Dickinson and the efforts of the moderate party.

The faith of a loyally religious people was expressed:

Wherefore appealing to the Searcher of hearts for the sincerity of the former declarations—

And finally, voicing boldness, foresight, and true patriotism, the principal measure proposed:

That the Delegates appointed to represent this colony in the General Congress be instructed to propose to that respectable body to declare the United Colonies free and independent States.

Not to agree, or to admit, or to join, or to follow. These instructions were clear—to propose. Tumult and excitement swept

through the room as the motion passed unanimously. The British flag, still flying above the Capitol, was hauled down, and the new Continental flag crept up the staff. Artillery drawn up outside fired a salute. Thomas Nelson set about immediate preparations to take horse for Philadelphia, since it was his mission to carry the Resolutions in person to the waiting Virginia delegation. He left to the others the task of drawing up the Bill of Rights which was to be sent to the Congress later and to others also the completing of the plans for a constitution for Virginia. Both *Common Sense* and *Thoughts on Government in a Letter from a Gentleman to his Friend* had been read with attention by the statesmen in Virginia with the fortunate result that they consulted *Common Sense* no further than to imbibe its enthusiasm for independence and settled to a more carefully considered plan for their own government. The Virginia Constitution was largely the work of George Mason, as was also the Bill of Rights whose opening words have their own reason for immortality:

That all men are born equally free and independent and have certain inherent natural rights . . . among which are the enjoyment of life, liberty . . . and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety.

It was during these deliberations and accomplishments that General Washington, absorbed as he was in military councils at Philadelphia, could still have deep concern for matters that were going forward in his own colony. He wrote from Philadelphia to his brother at Williamsburg, "I am glad indeed that the Virginia Convention passed so noble a vote and with such unanimity." This concerning the resolution for independence. He went on to urge that there should be no hurry or precipitation about setting up a new system of government. "Every man should consider that he is framing a constitution to render millions happy or miserable and that a matter of such moment cannot be the work of a day." The Convention had gone on to weigh and debate the constitution offered by George Mason's committee, to adopt it

and to elect Patrick Henry as successor to Lord Dunmore in the Governor's Palace. An appropriation of a thousand pounds was to be laid out in putting the building in proper order for the new tenant. Patrick Henry was simple in his tastes. It must have been that a good deal of portable property went away with the retiring governor.

We can look back now upon the momentous May Convention in Virginia as a signal example of action in the face of indecision and danger. Even at that time it was clear to all of those who foresaw the real future of America that Virginia had been able to follow most easily and directly the path along which all the others would be bound to go in the end. Virginia had her own great fortunes, her own landed estates valued and beloved by their owners, making the same kind of hazardous stakes in the revolutionary venture as were possessed by New York or Pennsylvania or Maryland. There had been individuals who hesitated and held back, here as elsewhere, but to the Virginia leaders it was now clear that the only way to save all was to risk all. Washington had come to see it, Pendleton had come to see it, the Lees had always seen it. They had their own differences, their own prejudices and errors; Richard Henry Lee did not completely approve of Washington, Edmund Pendleton distrusted what seemed to him the headlong rashness of young Thomas Jefferson. But they were more farsighted as a whole; they had brought finally a single mind and a single purpose to the grave problem which must be solved. They had a great sense of the responsibility of their colony, and they were neither reluctant nor afraid to be the first. Virginia had well justified that right of leadership which, by common consent, had been offered her from the first.

The "respectable body" which was to receive Virginia's suggestions was already in a considerable ferment. When the May Resolutions rolled through in spite of unavailing struggles by those who were beginning to call themselves "the cool men," the

delegates from Maryland, according to previous direction, withdrew themselves and went home. Ostensibly they went for instructions, but there was no guarantee that they would return. The measure for reorganizing governments looked to them alarmingly like independence, as it looked to many others, including King George. Various members of the Congress resigned, among them Andrew Allen, brother-in-law of Governor Penn, and Robert Alexander, a leading delegate from Maryland.

North Carolina, in a convention which met earlier than Virginia's, had adopted bolder instructions than before, but couched in a careful formula. She had authorized her delegates to "concur with the other colonies in declaring independency." Not one before another, it is to be observed, but when some unanimity of opinion seemed possible to realize. And unanimity was still a great way off. She made no change in her delegates, who voted by conscience rather than instruction. They were more or less evenly divided, so that it was well known that the change of one vote would reverse the whole position. But every vote seemed immovable.

The legislative body of South Carolina had received a severe shock when Christopher Gadsden, returning from Philadelphia in February, attended in his former place. He stood up, holding in his hand a copy of *Common Sense*. He, like the author, was for independence, he announced, with all the hot fervor of which Lynch had so bitterly complained. So dismayed were the members of the Assembly that one of them declared he was willing to mount horse and journey at once to Philadelphia, riding night and day to get there in time to reason with these ill-advised gentlemen if they were really taking *Common Sense* seriously. South Carolina's delegates had their instructions to "agree to and execute every measure which they, with a majority of the Continental Congress, shall judge necessary for the defence, security and welfare of this colony in particular and of America in general."

The position of Georgia was definite and satisfying. Lyman

Hall, who had come all alone to the first Congress as representative only of the Parish of St. John's, had returned in 1775 with a proper delegation, so that now Georgia took her place in the councils of the country. The members performed their part in the duties of the Congress with earnestness and good will, although none of them made any extraordinary mark upon the political action of the day. It might be said, however, that the conduct of the Reverend John Joachim Zubly constituted an exception to this statement. John Adams, who was sometimes deceived by his first impressions of people, thought him "an impressive, learned man of a warm and zealous spirit." That he was a Swiss and was reported to be able to speak English, Dutch, French, and Latin seems to have given him dignity in the eyes of the somewhat unsophisticated member from Massachusetts. Through the summer of 1775 the Reverend Zubly enjoyed considerable repute in the Congress until, very much of a sudden, public opinion of him underwent a violent change. Samuel Chase of Maryland, having seen, it is said, some intercepted letters of the reverend gentleman, hotly accused him of open and arrant treachery, of holding communication with the enemy in the person of the Governor of South Carolina, Lord Campbell.

No charges were ever officially laid against him, for he withdrew abruptly from the Congress, giving out that he was indisposed and also that he was completely disheartened by the resistance to his treasured object, the second Petition to the King. John Dickinson, deeply as he desired the same thing, could have had little taste for such an ally. There has been preserved a very odd document, a letter from Zubly to the Secretary of State of the Colonies, Lord Dartmouth, a one-man petition in which, in a long and ponderous address, he urges that the blessings of the British Constitution be extended to the inhabitants of North America. At least he vanished suddenly from the Congress, the only man in that body against whom suspicions of real treachery can be reasonably entertained. At the next election there came

from Georgia Mr. Button Gwinnett, who was to die in a duel, a year after, arising from a political quarrel in his own colony, but who was firm for independence. Georgia, in her convention, determined on a simple policy. "Our remote situation impels us to decline giving any particular instructions . . . we shall rely upon your patriotism, abilities . . . and integrity to propose, join and concur, in all such measures as you shall think calculated for the common good." Hall and Gwinnett were able in their support of the measures leading to independence, and John Adams called them "a powerful addition to our phalanx." Thus were aligned the colonies southward from the Potomac—Virginia certain and militant for independence, Georgia complying, North Carolina barely against it, South Carolina openly resistant. But between the Potomac and New England the prospect was a very different one.

Maryland stood firmly on her instructions to her delegates not to vote for independence. Pennsylvania was equally explicit in her directions and equally against the measure. The New Jersey delegates were, personally, all against it, although there were some mutterings at home that the feeling of the people was not represented. Delaware was prone to be divided, since there were only three delegates who went and came, often leaving only two in Philadelphia and those differing. In New York there was a wider cleavage of opinion than in New Jersey; New York's Committee of Safety was still largely conservative and held back the desire of the people and of some of the delegates to declare for separation. Such was the situation when Colonel Nelson, traveling rapidly in spite of his considerable size, arrived with the instructions that the Virginia delegates were to propose independence.

The question at once arose which one should have the great office of presenting the motion. If Peyton Randolph had been there the right would undoubtedly have been his as of the ranking member of the delegation. But to whom would the succession



pass? It was not easy to decide, since in spite of a united front, the Virginia leaders were as divided as any others. Benjamin Harrison was lukewarm and Carter Braxton strongly against the measure; moreover, they both disliked Jefferson and the Lees. George Wythe stood with the liberals. Wythe was the oldest. Nelson was the man who had proposed the measure in the Convention and who had brought it to Philadelphia. But Richard Henry Lee was the man who had contributed most to it of any Virginian, the most wisdom, the most leadership, the most untiring effort. It can be truly said that no man, not even the Adamses, had done more than he. His eloquence, his pleasant voice, his distinguished, easy presence, had all lent their own weight to his arguments. Nor had he antagonized people in Philadelphia as John Adams had done. One of the letters from London had reported of the King's party, "They entertain great hopes of success from the supposed coolness between Mr. D--k--s--n of Pennsylvania and Mr. J--- Ad--s of Massachusetts Bay." No such open quarrel existed in the Congress in the case of Mr. Lee. There was really no doubt that Richard Henry Lee was the man.

He was of such poise and such wide political experience that it would be difficult to think of any situation that would seem formidable to him. But the day came, the appointed day when all was ready, and Mr. Lee of Virginia was suffering from overwhelming excitement. It was the seventh of June; full-blown spring had passed into the deep warmth of summer. The streets were leafy again; ladies walked in thin, trailing flounces with parasols over their shoulders. All the windows stood open and the sound of horses' feet on the cobblestones came in. The meeting room was full. The delegation from Maryland had returned, although they still lacked the presence of Samuel Chase. He and Carroll were on the way home; their more and more comple'd reports had come to the Congress's hand. Misfortune, defeat, military mismanagement, were all set out with no truth hidden.

The army was in full retreat; the whole of Canada had been given up. And Burgoyne, so it was reported, was crossing the sea to Quebec with a special army, to follow the broken American forces down through the lakes and through the Hudson Valley. General Howe with his great force might land at any moment at New York, while his brother, the admiral, with the mighty fleet of Britain, was bearing down upon the coast. There was no detail of the whole appalling prospect which was not clear to every man there. Two days before, Washington had hurried back to his command.

Richard Henry Lee got up to speak. The chair recognized the gentleman from Virginia and the room grew silent. Lee said afterward that he felt as though the very last hour of his life had come. There was a phrase in the Declaratory Act which, years ago now, had demanded submission and dependency from the colonies. It was fitting indeed that, on a vastly different occasion, this gathering should hear it used again. Lee offered his resolution:

“That these United Colonies are and of right ought to be, free and Independent States.”

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## CHAPTER XIII

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### *Samuel Adams*

CHARLES THOMSON, for all his assiduity, honesty, and accuracy of reporting, had one deficiency. He was one man and not a Congressional Record. Long before, he had decided that, since he could not put down everything, record of debates was impossible, as were accounts of measures proposed and lost. Thus there is much that went on in the Congress of which we have no word preserved for posterity except by the chance notes of a member and for the rare occasions when the speaker had kept a written version of his own address. No member had the mind or the leisure to take notes on that day in June that Richard Henry Lee presented and supported his proposal for independence. We are told that in his speech he exerted all his grace, his power, and his clear, logical reasoning. We know, in general, what his arguments were, for he summarized his views in a letter to Landon Carter in which he said :

“It is not choice, then, but necessity that calls for independence as the only means by which foreign alliances can be obtained and a proper confederation by which internal peace and union may be secured.”

As he stood looking out across those rows of faces all turned to him, that last phrase above all was the one which needed to be stressed. Union! Here was a Congress, divided and diverse in its views, but still composed of men who had come there with one object, to serve their country. Parliament had asked Richard Penn whether the members of the Congress had used corruption or violence to procure their places. Who would so struggle for such an office, when the end of the term might mean the Tower

of London or a halter and gallows, with the stigma of traitor written against his name for all time? Here was a fairly elected body, honest men, representing honest constituents. And in such a body, union could be attained. There were great men across the sea whose hearts and whose magnificent minds were warm for American success; they were helpless now for that one reason—because union was impossible. In such an assemblage as was Parliament at that particular time, when in the representation there was so much that was irregular, unequal, unjustified, and self-interested, there was no possibility that it could become a machine to fabricate liberty. But these men who were listening to Richard Henry Lee, some of them angry, some of them afraid, some happy—diverse as they were, there was a single honest principle behind the very reason that they were there. With them it might be possible to touch a common belief and common understanding, a common wisdom which would achieve that union without which they were bound to be destroyed.

Mr. Lee came to the end of his speech. The second and third paragraphs of his brief resolutions had been to the effect that

“It is expedient forthwith to take the most effectual measures for forming foreign alliances” and that—

“A plan for Confederation be prepared and transmitted to the respective colonies for consideration and approbation.”

He sat down. Mr. John Adams of Massachusetts rose to second his motion and was followed by Mr. George Wythe of Virginia.

Because of the regulation that no resolution could be debated on the same day that it was offered, there was no immediate argument. Often the discussion was put off for a week or more, but this was not the case now. This was Friday and it was agreed that debate in the Committee of the Whole should take place tomorrow, Saturday, and that “the members be enjoined to attend punctually at ten o’clock.” The Congress settled itself to the business of the day, the consideration of an attempt made to counter-

feit its bills of credit. It is hardly to be believed that their minds were truly on their work.

The argument next day lasted from ten in the morning until seven at night. They were a seasoned group of debaters now. Most of them had sat in the Congress for more than a year, many for nearly two. They were used to each other's ways and abilities. The fine flowers of rhetoric which many had brought with them from their own political assemblies had been abandoned; they had withered in the stern air of this far more responsible gathering. There was so much to do, so many matters to decide day by day, that every person now felt impatient over listening to windy discourses that did not further some definite end. The power for incisive argument was ground to a sharp edge, the mighty force of sincere and moving eloquence was coming into its own. Various people had said that the moderates had all the orators on their side—Dickinson, Jay, Wilson, and Livingston. Amongst their opponents, Sullivan of New Hampshire, who spoke well, had left when Washington did; Christopher Gadsden, impetuous but convincing, and Thomas Johnson of Maryland, an able and ready speaker, had both departed some time since. There were those whom we now remember as the strongest advocates for independence who, in actual fact, said almost nothing in public debate. Jefferson spoke not at all, Franklin very seldom, Samuel Adams, the rock foundation of the New England policies, addressed the Congress sparingly. The weight of debate fell upon John Adams and Richard Henry Lee. To John Adams his colleagues gave their full and generous praise. "His was an eloquence," so Jefferson said, "that often moved us from our seats."

He had need of all his eloquence now as argument over the measure went from moderate man to violent and back again. The opposition by the moderates was sustained by James Wilson, Robert Livingston, Edward Rutledge, and John Dickinson. They had shifted their ground slightly, although their final aim was

much the same. They did not hope now for reconciliation with Britain, they said. That, any man could see, was impossible. But this was not the time for independence. To declare it in the face of overwhelming attack from England was not to be thought of. Moreover, the whole group of the middle colonies—New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland—were against it. They declared that, whatever leaders and delegates might think, the people were not ready, “had not yet accommodated their minds to a separation from the mother country.”

The answer to all this, sustained by Adams, Lee, and Wythe, was firm. Why talk of minds becoming accommodated when the fact was already established? England had cut off the colonies from her protection, had forbidden all commercial intercourse with them, had decreed that their property was forfeit, that every ship taken at sea was a lawful prize. Was there anything left of dependence in all this? Here was actual independence—why not recognize it?

The moderates had a most insidious argument to present in their turn. The colonies were in no position, they said, to support such an undertaking. America, even if united, could not face England alone; she must have a foreign alliance, or more than one if it were to be possible. On the point of the hopelessness of reconciliation both sides were at last agreed. But suppose certain rash and violent persons carried their several colonies into independence and the others would not follow? These dissenting colonies would secede. They stood, in fact, as a close geographical entity which would divide north from south and cut in two any support that the more unwise states might give one another. Would any other country ally itself with a body so divided, that could not achieve unity within itself? Would not the nations of Europe far rather prefer to see the division furthered? Would they not, in the end, agree with England to a partition of the severed provinces among Spain and France and Britain?

They expended their best efforts, some of them good, some

surpassingly good, some awkward, all sincere. Dickinson was always excellent in debate, collected, clear, logical, and convincing. Robert Livingston was, as a speaker, suave and unmoved. Edward Rutledge was the least effective figure on his side, being mannered, awkward, and nasal, so his adversaries said of him. They could well have used another strong supporter, John Jay, who was at home in New York, struggling with political difficulties there and wishing that "Governor Tryon and the devil," had not prevented his joining his colleagues. On the evening after the first day of debate Edward Rutledge sat down to write to him.

"The sensible part of the House opposed the Motion," he reported. "I wish you had been here; the whole argument was sustained on one side by R. Livingston, Wilson, Dickinson and Myself, and by all the Power of New England, Virginia and Georgia at the other."

Edward Rutledge settled the matter temporarily by offering the proposal that the whole question be postponed for three weeks. He would have liked to say three months, but did not consider it practical to attempt the carrying of such a motion. The delay, he suggested, would give the various delegations the opportunity to consult their colonial assemblies and conventions and they, in turn, could consult their constituents. The Adams-Lee party pressed for immediate decision, but seven colonies to five were for postponement. The moderates felt that it was a victory, were sure that they could collect sufficient evidence to prove that the country in general was not ready for it.

Late in the debate a man who was an infrequent speaker got up to present his views. Samuel Adams was known to everyone there for his skillful handling of matters out of doors, for his great political backing at home, for his impelling ideas. "I always considered him as, more than any other member, the fountain of our important measures," Jefferson wrote of him, as he spoke of his "high reverence" for Samuel Adams. Samuel Adams was one of the oldest men in the House, Hopkins of Rhode Island

and Benjamin Franklin being the only members who were older, but at that, Adams was only fifty-four. With no graces of personal address, with the reputation of a not too successful businessman, with an awkward, heavy manner of speaking, he was nonetheless one to whom everyone listened with respect. What his counsels had done for his two younger and more mercurial colleagues is a secret which neither of them revealed then or later; perhaps neither was really conscious of it himself. What he did for the cause of New England even two hundred years of historical record have not really measured. He was to strike a good blow, now, for the cause of all mankind.

The question which he took in hand was the opinion of the people. He was thoroughly persuaded, he declared, that the people wanted independence more even than did their more articulate leaders. The members of the Congress were tired with the long debate, but nonetheless they turned their minds to him. What Samuel Adams had to say could always command attention. He was a man who knew much of his own people; that was his great reputation, even among his adversaries. But did he know anything of the people outside his own colony?

Samuel Adams seemed to think that he did. His position as a member, from its inception, of the Massachusetts Committee of Correspondence had given him unique opportunities. He had communicated with all sorts and kinds of persons in all the colonies, and his knowledge so gained was at his fingers' ends. He came soon to the subject of North Carolina; he had letters, documents, and arguments to show that here the Congress might have full confidence. Here was a colony ripe for independence.

There was a little commotion within the room; a member from North Carolina looked up and stirred in his seat. Joseph Hewes, in that company of evenly matched opinions, was, in his own mind, almost equally balanced between doubt and approval. Samuel Adams's heavy voice, his firm confidence, his unanswerable information, were too much for the doubts at last. Within



himself Hewes came to so great a conclusion that there was no controlling the outward manifestation of it. He threw up both his hands to heaven and cried out with a loud voice, "It is done. I will abide by it." For him the matter was settled, and with his altered opinion North Carolina's delegation stood for independence. The faces of those in the moderate group darkened; there was danger for them that the immediate question would, after all, be taken up and voted. Someone among them had the quickness to ask for adjournment. The mood broke; it was evening now and they had been sitting since ten o'clock in the morning. Chairs scraped, feet shuffled, and the first day of debate was over.

One other man was even more deeply moved by the speech that Samuel Adams delivered that day. There was in it no emotional appeal, no militant onslaught, only steel-hard clarity and reasoning, only boundless conviction and confidence. But John Morton, sitting in his place in the Pennsylvania delegation, heard Samuel Adams first with little sympathy, then with growing interest, and finally with absorbed and agonized attention. Morton was a man of humble birth but of great attainments, a farmer's son, with the very least of formal education, but nonetheless a man deservedly honored by his associates. He had long been a representative in the Pennsylvania Assembly; he was now Speaker of the Pennsylvania House as well as delegate to the Congress. His forebears were Swedish, among the earliest settlers in the Philadelphia region. He himself was of strong religious affiliation, with all of a devout man's conscientious soul-searching when the question of resort to force came up. His own friends—many of them Quakers—his business associates, all those with whom he had to do, were against issuing this challenge to the enemy which independence would surely mean. In close agreement with John Dickinson, he had voted in the Pennsylvania Assembly for instructions against independence; he was against independence now. He had already observed that the first step in that direction, the May Resolutions for colonial governments,

was having disastrous effect upon the established order of things in Pennsylvania. He was aware what terrible, what bloody results the voting of independence might easily have; he was certain that all those who voted for it must feel themselves responsible. Yet, fortified though he was in his own opinion, Samuel Adams's convincing sincerity caught him unawares, threw him into a storm of inward tumult. As the session ended he got up and went out, a man full of dreadful doubt.

One political victory had been won that day by the men for independence. It was proposed and passed that a committee be appointed to make ready a written declaration, so that, three weeks hence, on July first, if independence was actually voted there would be no time lost. A public statement of the reasons and purposes of the step must be issued then by the Congress.

By every right in the world—save one—Richard Henry Lee should have been chairman of the committee for a declaration, should have been the man to compose it. But here politics stepped in and could not be ignored. Certain Virginia delegates objected, raking up the old grudge against him as a man who had overstepped political propriety in his youth. They had not been able to prevent his being chosen to offer the Resolution, but they would accede to nothing more. They could not know that the greatest acclaim of history for any member of the Congress was to go to the man who wrote the actual document, that the greatest anniversary would be the date on which the paper was approved. Richard Henry Lee's friends and allies did their best for him, but this was a matter, apparently, in which Virginia herself was to have the final voice, and Virginia, in the Congress, was hard against him. They offered Benjamin Harrison as an alternate, a man who had been cold to independence and was the direct adversary of Lee at home. He was the oldest member of the delegation now, and belonged to the oldest family. John Adams fairly shuddered at the suggestion and, under the threat of Harrison, was willing to compromise. Perhaps all of them, perhaps

Lee himself, realized that, in spite of his eminence as a speaker, he had no such prowess with the written word. Choice, by final agreement, fell upon Mr. Jefferson, who had never uttered a syllable in debate, who had indeed attended the sessions with some infrequency. John Adams was appointed to the committee, as was most proper, and Benjamin Franklin, as the most distinguished member of the Congress for its most important task. Roger Sherman, who had firmly supported independence from the first, was also selected, along with Robert Livingston of the moderate party, so that—so his associates maintained—there would be one cool man among the hotheads. Debate for the third day, Monday, settled on Rutledge's motion for postponement, which finally carried. The delegations were to have until July first to consult with their respective colonies. Until then there would be little thought for anything else, but until July first it must be.

After those days of pregnant debate, members of the Congress scattered. Richard Henry Lee left at once; there was serious illness in his family, he declared, requiring his presence at home. Yet a very few days later he was taking part in the deliberations of the Virginia Convention, still sitting. He has left no word on how he felt over being omitted from the committee for the declaration. More than one man had been appointed to a committee during absence, but this was not such an occasion. And the great cause did not really need him now. All that a man could do in the way of planning, laboring, and pleading was completed. The results, be they small or mighty, must come through other hands.

On June eleventh, the day after the last debate, Samuel Chase and Charles Carroll arrived from Canada. They had little more to tell beyond what their letters had conveyed, but a verbatim report was more harrowing than the written word. It was plain to his closest friends, of whom John Adams was beginning to be one, that Chase had come back from Canada a changed man.

His had been a pleasant, sheltered life for all of his thirty-five years, so that he let things pass easily before him without pressing forward to play too great a role among those who were setting the shape and stature of liberty. But in Canada he had seen such sights as he had never known to exist; he had learned what mischief could be wrought by error or carelessness or inexperience. And, further, he had been for weeks in the company of a wise, tolerant man whose deep and unswerving conviction had been, for more than a year, that independence was America's destiny. Chase came back with his tale of horror and defeat to find new dangers threatening, to hear of an army ready to land thousands of red-coated or guttural-speaking blue-clad soldiers on America's shores. And with all this he met also the news that his fellow delegates had the instructions of Maryland to resist, definitely and explicitly, any move for independence, instructions in which most of them were willing to acquiesce. A man direct from the front, from the sight and realization of what war was, who had been weeks in the wilderness away from all the conventionalities of political procedure, was not going to accept this edict without protest.

An agreeable fact about Samuel Chase was that, politically speaking, he was not one man and one vote, but two. William Paca, of Harford County, had been his friend and associate since they were both very young men, working together in their first resistance to proprietary government. People said that there was a certain pleasant indolence about William Paca, but it was more than matched by warm loyalty and capacity for friendship. This, with his admiration of Chase, made him ready to follow wherever his more enterprising friend decided that the two of them should go. And Chase was certain in what direction they should move now.

On the very day of his return, the Maryland delegation, heretofore resting quietly on the previous instructions, was suddenly moved to write a letter to the Maryland Council of Safety, asking

that a convention be called that would carry the real voice of the people. This must be done at once, since the time was so short, but they had three weeks at least. The reply of the Maryland Council was somewhat delayed and was scarcely satisfactory. A convention had already been announced, to meet on June twentieth, four days hence. It was far too short a time, they declared, to make any move to get the opinions of their constituents; the questions would have to be decided without such information. It would upset matters much too greatly for it to be practical to make any such attempt at this late moment. Samuel Chase had not waited for their reply. His wife was very ill and he had, moreover, some inkling of what the attitude of the Maryland Council would be. He made no open promise to his friend John Adams, but it was tacitly understood between them that Chase would exert his utmost endeavors at this moment when time was so perilously short.

Charles Carroll of Carrollton—always so called because there were more of his name, and in public life—left for home with the same intention. For him, too, those days in the northern woods had been illuminating, so that he brought home a stronger determination than ever to serve his country boldly. The time was running out quickly, but these two, disregarding all offers of celebrations for their safe conclusion of a perilous journey, set themselves to riding up and down their colony, bidding the people gather and give frank and honest instruction to their representatives in the coming convention. It was late June, the weather was fine, the roads open and dry; the freemen in the country districts had passed beyond their busiest season of plowing and planting. The masters of plantations and the merchants had launched their programs for cultivation or commerce for the year. They had a little leisure; they came together, they heard Chase speak, or Carroll; they read Chase's circular letter urging them to exercise their just rights. They duly gave instruction to their delegates to repair to Annapolis to vote thus for Anne

Arundel County and Frederick and Prince George. The Convention met; there was struggle, there was argument, and one day after another passed. A hasty message was sent to Philadelphia. Would the Congress give permission to all the members for Maryland still remaining in the city to come home? Would the Congress postpone the discussion of the question of independence until the Maryland Convention had come to its own decision? The Congress would not. Time and the British invasion would wait for no man or convention. The whole of the thirteen colonies were preparing to settle the matter on July first.

During this same time matters had been moving with great speed in New Jersey. It had been the argument of John Dickinson's side that the middle colonies were not yet ready, that, in particular, the Jerseys were in no state to express the actual wishes of the people. That had been the report of the delegates who were first elected from the colony—William Livingston, John De Hart, and Richard Smith. But affairs had progressed so rapidly at home that it seemed as though the delegates had not quite kept up with them. On June nineteenth there was read to the Congress the unexpected news that New Jersey had put her royal governor, William Franklin, out of office and recommended that he be arrested and imprisoned. It was thus that the hard reality of independence was thrust home to one member of the Congress. Neither Benjamin Franklin nor any of his friends has left behind any written word of how a loyal and affectionate father took that blow. The Congress was a body of high courtesy. It is not known whether Franklin was in his place that day, but he had recovered from the illness following his journey to Canada and had returned to active affairs. Charles Thomson was one of William Franklin's closest and oldest friends. But patriotic necessity cut through even the relations of father to son, of friend to friend, and Thomson read aloud the letter and recorded New Jersey's action without faltering. New Jersey was recalling all her delegates, it was further announced, and was

electing new ones. The final selection contained important names : first, that of Richard Stockton, the great man of the Princeton community who had traveled abroad with honors, who was Chief Justice of the colony and who had brought John Witherspoon from Scotland to be President of the College of New Jersey. A further delegate was Witherspoon himself, as able, as dryly wise, as practically sensible, and as devoted a patriot as ever held a seat in the Congress. Francis Hopkinson, the writer, the wit of his time and colony, was added to the list. All of them were chosen at the last moment and did not reach Philadelphia until debate on the great question had actually begun.

Among all the middle colonies, Pennsylvania was in the most serious state of internal disagreement. Quakers who were for peace, frontiersmen who were for war, merchants and landed proprietors who were for reconciliation and compromise, had been unable to come together on any principle of liberty for all. A growing number were completely at odds with the final form and travesty of proprietary government which was poised at the summit of the whole unsubstantial political structure. Opinion waxed hot and furious after the May Resolutions were passed, but the old Assembly, the base and source of John Dickinson's following, still held out firmly for its legal authority and for its repeated instructions that the Pennsylvania delegates were not to vote for independence. All eyes were regarding in curiosity or anxiety the system of Pennsylvania government and wondering how its difficult problems would ever be met. As they watched, the whole unsteady, unsound structure collapsed and dissolved before them.

When the order came from the Congress to form a new system and a new constitution, the blow was desperate to those in Pennsylvania who had, so they thought, got the situation under temporary control. The delegates supported in the Congress by the Assembly were after their own pattern—John Dickinson, Robert Morris—Philadelphia's most successful merchant, a man as

stoutly for reconciliation as Dickinson himself—and Thomas Willing, who was Morris's business partner and of like mind with him. John Morton was a man far gone in ill health and now deeply troubled within his own mind. There was James Wilson, a man who was to prove himself later one of his country's important statesmen, but who, for the moment, has to be recalled as he who moved to repudiate any idea of separation. There was the conservative Charles Humphreys. There was also Benjamin Franklin, for Pennsylvania could not pass over her most distinguished citizen. Only one man, the last, was openly and steadily for independence.

While the Pennsylvania Assembly argued and wrangled over the necessity or expediency of altering their positive instructions to their delegates in the Congress, while they met under the same roof as that body but remained singularly blind to the mounting forces in the room below, the progress of human thought was quietly by-passing them and moving onward. After struggling for days with no quorum, they managed, on June fourteenth, to muster enough members to pass a resolution that, whereas in November they had enjoined their delegates "to dissent from and utterly reject any proposition, should such be made, that might cause or lead to a separation from Great Britain . . . the situation of publick affairs is since so greatly altered that we now think ourselves justifiable in removing the restrictions laid upon you by these instructions." They made no change in their representation in the Congress, however, and the same men sat in their old seats, released from any specific injunction to resist independence, but still maintaining their old opinions, the established beliefs of Dickinson, Morris, Willing, Morton, Wilson, Humphreys—and Franklin.

Then the Assembly adjourned and did well to do so. There had been, first, an uproarious meeting of the military in Philadelphia who demanded that, since the Assembly had done nothing to carry out the May Resolutions of the Congress, there should be



a convention called to consider a new constitution. Four days later, on June eighteenth, a conference of the local committees of Pennsylvania gathered at Carpenters' Hall and passed resolutions stating that "the present Government of this Province is not competent to the exigencies of our affairs" and that "A Provincial Convention be called to form a new government." It was two years, lacking a day, since a mass meeting had gathered in the State House yard and drafted resolutions calling for a congress. The voice of the people of America was beginning to be more and more directly heard. But there was no time, nor any authority yet, to change the Pennsylvania delegation, and they remained in their places.

The lower counties of the Delaware, linked only to Pennsylvania by possession of a common British governor, had taken their own way. They had called their Assembly, officially severed themselves from any political connection with Pennsylvania, and released their delegates from the earlier instructions to abstain from any move furthering independence. Delaware's representatives were three; Thomas McKean, who was strong for separation, George Read, who was firmly and conscientiously against it, and Caesar Rodney, advocate of independence, but often absent from Philadelphia. He was Speaker of the Assembly and commander of the militia, so that his duties away from the Congress seemed more pressing than those within it. Now, in particular, military affairs were demanding most of his time as his colony put herself into a state of defense.

Among the middle colonies, but not of the proprietaries, was New York. Her delegates had written at once for instructions, since they did not consider themselves authorized to take any stand concerning the measure when it should come up for debate again. The members of the Convention at home argued and disagreed, delaying day after day to call any meeting, while the men in Philadelphia waited in fretted anxiety. Without word from home, they maintained, they had no right to vote.

It was now the end of June, and the day for final debate was close at hand. Close also, was another event, concerning which there were none of the uncertainties which hovered over the list of colonies for and against independence. The threat of the British Army was very near, with all signs certain that the plan was to land at New York, to take possession of that port as a preliminary step to overrunning the whole of the rebellious country. An armed sloop had come into New York Harbor and carried Governor Tryon out for a conference with the British commanders. When once that torrent broke upon their shores, if the first battle should prove a disastrous defeat for the Americans, what hope was there that men could then be brought to vote for independence?

Night after night anxious conclaves were held, in the separate lodgings, at Mrs. Yard's, where the New England delegates lived, at the City Tavern, where members were constantly meeting for dinner and talk, upstairs at Mr. Graaf's on Market Street, where Thomas Jefferson had two second-floor rooms with a staircase between. He had written out the first draft of the declaration, which was read to the Congress and laid on the table to await discussion of the Resolution itself. But even if it were adopted, even if it were carried by a bare majority, could that be considered final? Would John Dickinson, as he had suggested in the first debate, as he had hinted long ago to John Adams, arrange for separation within the colonies themselves? Again and again the numbers were counted. New England, Virginia, and Georgia—these sure. New Jersey now, by all indications. North Carolina, perhaps. Nothing heard, so far, from Maryland, and no new delegates yet arrived from New Jersey. New York delegates maintaining that they could not vote, and no disposition shown by their Convention to put an end to such a situation. Every dissenting colony was a breach in the wall for the enemy to come through. And two of those from whom dissent seemed certain were among the largest in America, in the very heart of

the country, obviously to be the first to endure the impact of the new attack.

Such were the facts which were discussed and pondered again and again as members of the Congress, in little groups, sat far into the night, checked their lists, crossed off names and added them, counted and recounted. John Dickinson, at home at Fairhill, was working on the speech which he was to deliver, the most important address of his whole political life. As he polished and elaborated and reviewed, he could not keep his mind from turning aside to military affairs. The troops which had been drilling for months on the open spaces about Philadelphia would set off in a short time to join Washington at New York. He was colonel of one of those battalions which was so soon to advance into certain combat. Were they ready? Had he done the best for them that was possible? Would they meet the enemy with credit?

Edward Rutledge, too, was passing over lists and numbers in his mind, all that had been said and argued, all that was still to be brought forward. His reluctant admiration for that man from Massachusetts still kept thrusting through his consciousness. How little they had regarded the fellow at first, and now see where he and his cousin and Lee had brought the Congress! And the absurdly visionary Adams was even talking about the possibility of a unanimous vote.

On the last day of June but one, John Adams finally heard from Samuel Chase. The message was written in such excitement that it was nothing but a hasty scrawl, a note dashed off the night before and dispatched at once by express rider. Within the hour, Chase said, his Convention had voted unanimously to instruct for independence. Within another twenty-four hours the delegates would have the official communication from their Convention, and the result would be all that these two friends could wish for—a full vote from Maryland. Lists were taken out and revised; one more colony was sure.

Sunday night went by, the last of June. Rumors were running

through the Philadelphia streets : there were British warships at the mouth of the Delaware, and at New York, sixty more sail were off Sandy Hook and the first landing had been made, a troop horse. July came in, overwhelmingly hot, with thick sunshine and a breeze from the south, weather that augured a thunderstorm before the day should be over.

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## CHAPTER XIV

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### *Dover Post Road*

WITH the coming of really hot weather, the Congress had moved its hour of meeting from ten to nine o'clock. There were no casual absences on that morning of July first and only the most hardened laggards were even on the edge of tardiness. People going by outside, taking a short way through the State House yard between Walnut and Chestnut Streets, were aware of the steady hum of voices coming from inside. It was vaguely known that matters of great moment were in hand, but it was easy to let these wiser and more able men settle them than to think too deeply for oneself.

Within, although the breeze came in at the wide windows, the high-ceilinged room was already growing hot. Practically every chair was filled, although interested persons, looking about and counting those for and against, took note of the fact that the New Jersey members had not yet taken their seats and that Mr. Samuel Chase of Maryland was still away. Richard Henry Lee's place was empty; he was in Virginia. John Jay was not there, although Edward Rutledge had sent in haste to beg for his presence. Governor Tryon and the devil still kept him. Charles Thomson unfolded a document just arrived from Annapolis and read it aloud. The Convention of Maryland announced a resolution, passed June twenty-eighth, that "Its deputies be empowered to concur with the other United Colonies, or a majority of them, in declaring the United Colonies free and independent States." Confederation and foreign alliances were to be agreed to also.

The usual nagging delay of reading and approving small claims was laid aside that day. It had been voted that the Congress should

sit as a committee of the whole to consider the resolution offered by the member from Virginia on June seventh. John Hancock relinquished the chair to the presiding officer of the Committee of the Whole. That place had long been held by the genial and well-liked Governor Ward of Rhode Island. After Ward's death from smallpox in March it went to Benjamin Harrison. The debate was opened and John Dickinson got up at once to speak.

"The consequences involved in the motion now lying before you are of such magnitude that I tremble under the oppressive honor of sharing in its determination."

His address was measured, reasonable, and carefully composed. He spoke with his old habit of command of his audience, in the manner of a man who knows himself highly regarded, listened to by a worthy following. The habit of extempore speech was general in the Congress, but it was evident that this one was fully premeditated. He was not against independence for the future, he stated; his plea was only that this was not the time. America lay under the shadow of an enormous danger, borne down upon by the oncoming British forces and the power of a great kingdom behind them. It was evident to everybody that a single campaign would decide the issue. Should the colonies plunge into so irretrievable a step without one single test of strength, not a battle fought? The fact of independence would not fortify their arms by a single man, by an ounce of supplies. There was no evidence in history where a people, without a battle, without an ally, had abrogated forever their connection with a strong, great country. "Some assert that . . . more boldly than Caesar himself, we ought to brave the storm in a skiff made of paper."

British friends—and there were still many—would be lost by this final step, he went on. Of the three advances that were necessary to make America a country of its own right, the setting up of confederated government must come first. By the authority of that government should come foreign alliance. Then, and only

then, should independence be considered. Foreign aid would not be captured by any immediate declaration; foreign aid would wait until a signal military success would prove that the country had strength of its own. When the individual governments were not yet completed, when even the very boundaries between colony and colony were not defined, when it could not be said that there was any possibility of general agreement—was this a time to ask for foreign alliance, to challenge the powerful government of Great Britain?

It was a strong speech, searching out all the weaknesses of the plan, all the weaknesses of untried America. At the end, it warmed, gathered force, threw out intensity of feeling as Dickinson looked across the room at his opponents, those violent men who had resisted him for so long. Such a tremendous step in a nation's history, he said, should be taken only as the result of careful prudence, regulated by the most completed and reasoned justification. There was no power, no dignity before the world, in an action moved by headlong rashness, by the force of passion.

He resumed his seat and, after the ripple of approval from his supporters, there was silence. No one rose to answer him. The real orator of the opposition was gone. Thomas Jefferson would never speak, certainly not now, nor would Franklin. Samuel Adams felt himself of no use at such a juncture; Roger Sherman felt the same. John Adams sat hesitating in his place. He had addressed them so many times on this same subject, with the same arguments. He knew that they grew weary of his reiterated attack, that they resented him. He had not let it deter him; he always went doggedly on. But today there should be another, one to whom the odium of long contention was not attached. But no one else offered and he got up to speak.

For the first time in his life, he declared, he wished for the eloquence of the great Greeks and Romans, having so great a subject, so great an opportunity. But he could only put the truth before them, the truth as they had heard it so many times. He

replied to Dickinson's arguments, expressed confidence where the other had voiced such doubt, declared that if independence, confederation, and foreign alliance could not all come at once, then independence must assuredly come first. It was indeed the irrevocable step. It was also the essential step for America.

There is no record of who spoke further, although we know there were many. William Paca supported the measure "generously and nobly," as Adams wrote later to Samuel Chase. There was, before very long, an interruption; the new members from New Jersey came in—Stockton, Hopkinson, Witherspoon, and the rest. Once they were settled in their places, their spokesman, Stockton, expressed the wish of all of them to hear a recapitulation of the arguments. Again there was a pause. Edward Rutledge came over to John Adams. "You are the only one who will speak," he said, and to Adams's protestations that he was merely being made a show of, Rutledge insisted that the New Jersey gentlemen must be satisfied and that Adams was best qualified to do so.

It is said that Richard Stockton had come with the instructions of New Jersey to concur if he thought it necessary, but that he was not satisfied within himself that independence was a matter advisable or unavoidable. His judicial mind wished to examine the ordered reasons, not the rapid and excited hearsay which had reached him at Princeton. But after John Adams, in a brief speech addressed to them alone, had reviewed the established arguments on both sides, Stockton expressed himself as satisfied. It is said that Witherspoon spoke with all the grace and eloquence of his famous sermons, but this is not certain. The moment was reached when, as Committee of the Whole, they were to vote on the question.

Votes were taken in geographical order of colonies, beginning at the north. One after another stated the results of that long struggle with reason, conscience, and desire. New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut—all in favor of



the resolution for independence. New York was unable to vote, still lacking instructions; their Convention was only that day meeting. New Jersey was for it, "voting plump," as John Adams had prophesied.

But Pennsylvania was firmly against it. Franklin voted for it. And with him, for the first time, voted James Wilson. Even though for months he had been a leader in resistance to the measure, he had now come slowly to a different view. He and Franklin had been together as commissioners to the Indians, and association with Franklin was likely to have an enlightening effect upon younger and reasonable men. But these two were the only Pennsylvania voices for independence, the other five—Dickinson, Robert Morris, John Morton, Willing, and Humphreys—were all against it.

Delaware could not give a vote. McKean, the thin man with a nose like an eagle's and with eyes like an eagle's too, was in favor. George Read was against it. Delaware was blocked.

Maryland, relieved of hampering instructions at last, was for it. North Carolina, thanks to the change of heart of Joseph Hewes, was for it. South Carolina was against it; Georgia was for it.

The thunderstorm outside swept up and passed, leaving the cobble paving stones drenched and the air cooler. The votes were counted. Nine colonies were for it, two against it, two nullified. No unanimity, although it was nearer than anyone might have hoped. The Committee of the Whole dissolved and John Hancock resumed the chair. Now, he announced, the Congress itself would vote whether or not to accept the majority decision of the committee.

He was stopped in his announcement. Edward Rutledge got up. He had hearkened well to John Adams, his sometime friend, his sometime opponent. South Carolina was against the measure, he declared, but for the sake of unanimity they might be able to alter their position. His was the first voice that day to suggest the

possibility of a unanimous vote. Give them until tomorrow, he urged, and they would see what they could do. Postponement was voted and the session came to an end.

Earlier, Thomas McKean had slipped out on a mission of his own. He was dispatching an express rider to Dover, in Delaware, to find Mr. Caesar Rodney and carry him the message that he was urgently needed in the Congress. The downpour of rain was somewhat dismaying, but express riders knew how to make time in spite of weather. It had cleared completely by evening and men walked home to their lodgings in white moonlight.

People woke later in the night, however, to see the outlines of open windows and of bending trees outside clearly illuminated in the unearthly brilliance of lightning, while thunder growled and cracked across the roofs. To Thomas McKean it meant a question whether, after all, his express would be in time, whether the roads would not dissolve in mire to delay his rider or to make Mr. Rodney decide that it was useless to set out. Edward Rutledge and his South Carolina colleagues had matters of high importance to settle. There was much counsel to be taken and talk to be carried late into the night, for they must offer a grave conclusion by morning. Edward Rutledge had been against independence himself, of that no man needed to remind him. But was not a country united better than one divided, even though united in the opposite opinion to South Carolina's? They had listened to the summing up of the case by the able lawyer, John Dickinson, presenting all the doubts and difficulties in the way; they had listened to the summing up by the able lawyer, John Adams, offering them a glimpse of the high possibilities, the unknown, visionary end. Independence would be voted next day, of that there was no longer a doubt. But was it to be the independence of a sundered country, protesting between its members? The decision was made at last; they said good night and parted.

For one man of that great company there could hardly have been any sleep at all. John Dickinson, returning to Fairhill after

a consultation with Robert Morris had, also, a decision to make and to make alone. His mind went back to that day outside the State House, to his indignant altercation with a short, obstinate man from that disliked and dreaded home of leveling influences, New England. John Adams's words were the last which had passed between them, except across the floor of public debate. And they were words to be long remembered. "Congress must judge, and if they pronounce against me, I must submit, and if they determine against you, you ought to acquiesce." Here was a truth that lay at the very base and foundation of democracy. On that occasion Dickinson had seemed to triumph and John Adams had yielded, perhaps with no very abundant grace, and had signed his name to the Petition to the King. And now—? The Congress was on the point of deciding that it was Adams who was right after all, and not Dickinson, not the man who had held Pennsylvania under his easy and long-standing leadership, not the man whose every belief, every hope, every gift of statesmanship and eloquence had been poured out for the purposes of peace and reconciliation. There were plenty of men who still thought that signing the Declaration would be putting their names to a death warrant, giving the British ministry a neat and completed list of those who were to be judged guilty of high treason. That matter weighed with John Dickinson not at all.

But could he put his name to that document as a token of surrender, as subscribing to that principle of violence which he had abhorred and resisted, but which had at last prevailed? That he could not do. But in all honor there was one thing that he could do, that he would do. He must tell his wife—his Polly—and his mother what had happened in the Congress that day and what was the sure portent for tomorrow. He must tell them further what was his own determination. Whether they had some knowledge already of what his final plan must be cannot be known, but certainly they could not know of his last conclusions, for they had not been completed until the members of the Congress gave

their votes in the Committee of the Whole. The protests of the two women had been great on other occasions; they would be greater now, for this which he must tell them would be beyond anything they had really conceived. But they must know, he must get ready. He must call his servant and bid him get out uniforms and pack them, get his sword, his great military cloak, see about his horse. He must open his desk, sort papers, destroy them, make ready for a long absence, an absence that might well be forever.

For John Dickinson had determined to march with his battalion when it set out to go to the assistance of Washington. He would not go back to the Congress; he had spoken his last words against independence. He could not vote for it, he could not even give the formal approval of his presence when every principle within him stood against what his fellow members were about to do. But he would no longer vote against it. He and Robert Morris, with whom he had just made agreement, would absent themselves. James Wilson had already joined the other side; there were some signs that John Morton might do the same thing. Let them settle it according to their own consciences; this was what his own heart and spirit bade him do. The King's ministers would not lift their hearts in the hope that America would fall by inward division—at least such hopes would not come through him. There was no time for long thought or lamentation or regret, there was so much to do. How many papers there were, how many small affairs to set in order. How many ties form around a man, which must be broken when he marches away to war. Through the windows came in the sound of rain on the garden, then quiet and the smell of heavy, wet shrubs and fragrant summer flowers. Was he ever to live at Fairhill again?

History has given us the answer to that question. It was no, for in the next year the British were to burn it to ashes.

As he turned to gather his papers, he let himself give one backward glance at the years of his political life, at the great acclaim for the *Farmer's Letters*, at his distant beginning as a young

lawyer, as a young politician. And suddenly there came flooding in upon him, not sorrow, not bitterness, but relief, pleasure, conviction that, though he had expended his best efforts in defending the course which he felt was right, now the whole responsibility was taken from his hands, the weight of decision was gone from him forever. It was all behind him. When next he saw his colleagues of the Congress it would be to cast his eyes over their rows of faces at the curb of the street as they watched him, John Dickinson, the son of Quakers, the son and husband of great fortunes, riding at the head of his troops. They would see the lines of men coming behind him with muskets on their shoulders and bucktails in their hats, with all their faces set toward battle.

The second of July came, the day that our American democracy was really born. The rain was still falling steadily, the leaves of the trees hung heavy and brushed the tops of the high-piled carts as they came in to the market. Men came through the down-pour, in groups and couples, deep in talk, to enter the State House and take their seats. The room was filling up; once more anxious eyes scanned the rows of faces. The rumor had flown about that Morris was not coming, that Dickinson was not coming. Would that turn the vote of Pennsylvania, which for so long had offered only Franklin's voice for independence? Delaware was divided still; George Read's conscience had not yielded an inch. But Edward Rutledge came in smiling. South Carolina had agreed. Thomas McKean was standing, anxious, in the doorway. There had been no word from Caesar Rodney. John Adams sat, quiet, in his place; every man was quiet, and yet the very air quivered with anticipation. Was it possible that the whole wide hope might be fulfilled, that the colonies would vote as one for separation from England, that they could present an unbroken front to the gaze of an astonished world? John Hancock dropped his gavel. The meeting was open, the vote was to be taken. The voice of Charles Thomson was reading out the preliminary instructions.

Suddenly, above his words, there was the sound of horse's

hoofs on cobblestones, a horse galloping through the quiet street where, as far as ordinary business went, it was still early morning. The horse was coming nearer, along Walnut Street, reaching the State House yard and pulling up. Thomas McKean, still waiting on the steps, saw a tall figure dismount and come striding across the wet open square. It was Caesar Rodney.

"The thunder and rain delayed me," Rodney said briefly. He had ridden all night and was wet and covered with mud from boots to shoulders, but he had made as good time as the most rapid express. His eyes were hollow and his face dark with fatigue. They went in together.

There was a stir within and then a hush as heads turned toward them. Everyone knew Caesar Rodney, his long, emaciated figure, his narrow, ravaged face. Everyone knew also that he was in the grip of a mortal disease. Some time since he had talked of going to England for treatment; it was obviously his only hope. Well, he would never go now. The clerk's voice stopped; the vote was to be taken. He called the first name, the Colony of New Hampshire. Josiah Bartlett got up and gave his vote. For independence.

The names went on, through New England, every colony for it. New York abstained; there were still no new instructions and the old ones held. New Jersey was unanimously for it, where once her delegates had been all on the other side. And now it was the turn of Pennsylvania.

Benjamin Franklin was for it, as had been known for a long time. Charles Humphreys was against it. James Wilson was for it, a man relieved and happy after long doubt. Thomas Willing was against it. An even vote so far. And now John Morton.

John Morton was sitting in his chair, mindful of nothing but the tumult within him. All his principles, like Dickinson's, cried out for peace. Once he had been so certain of what was right. But since that day when he had listened to Samuel Adams, had heard Hewes cry aloud as he threw up his hands and capitulated

—since then he had not been sure. There is something convincing in utter belief, utter honesty of purpose. Where was he to turn, how was he to speak? The vote reached him and everyone waited in silence. John Morton voted for independence.

The tide of common feeling, which was democracy, had risen and swept them all away. Delaware was for it, now that Caesar Rodney was there; Maryland was for it; Virginia, with her solid vote; North Carolina and South Carolina. Edward Rutledge could give his full loyalty and admiration to John Adams at last. Georgia was for it, as she had been from the beginning. Here was unanimity indeed; here was the answer to England and to all who had doubted. Here was the news that the British commanders were to hear, the first tidings told to them on landing—that they were to fight against a country, not thirteen colonies.

So, in the first hours of their meeting on that rainy July morning, the United States began to be. As soon as the vote was completed and Charles Thomson had read off the results, the Congress of the United States turned to its first piece of business. The Committee for the Declaration of Independence had brought in its report, in the handwriting of Mr. Thomas Jefferson. It now remained to debate it, paragraph by paragraph, so that the words of Thomas Jefferson and the committee might become the words of all.

Night after night, Jefferson, sitting without coat and waistcoat in his white ruffled shirt, had toiled over the document which had been trusted to him to indite. As has been said, custom would have given the task to Richard Henry Lee as the man who had moved the original measure. Passing him, it should have gone to John Adams, who had seconded the Resolution. But Adams's first request was that Jefferson should write the Declaration. There was never a sounder decision on John Adams's part than this one to waive his right to compose the document whose future greatness he so clearly envisioned.

For every man in public service there is a measure of bitter-

ness ; for Adams there was perhaps a larger share than any other man was so undeservedly to endure. From the very hour when he reached Philadelphia he had been warned, criticized, silenced, and disregarded, and still he had triumphed. He had drunk his bitter draught sometimes with rebellion, sometimes with despair, but never with meanness of spirit. His renunciation now was not in bitterness but in the integrity of pure wisdom. Thomas Jefferson said of him "no more honest man ever issued from the hands of his Maker than John Adams."

What he said to Jefferson now was, "I am obnoxious, suspected and unpopular, you are very much otherwise." And "You can write ten times better than I." John Adams was quite right. Jefferson could. He well deserved the highest task that the Congress could lay on any man.

Therefore Jefferson sat in his hot upper room alone, with the little wooden desk on his lap, dipping his quill pen, writing and scratching out and writing again. When a draft was illegible on account of corrections, he discarded it and began a fresh copy. It was not his part, he declared, to set up any new doctrine or policy. What he undertook was to give words to all those great concepts which had filled men's minds for weeks and months. The paper began to stretch to considerable length, but he could not determine, alone, what to include and what to omit. When it was completed he submitted it to John Adams for his suggestions and additions. Again John Adams showed his wisdom, for he suggested very little. He did not hold, even now, with calling King George a tyrant, but there was no need of making objections. What one called George III in America was a small matter now. He did, however, remove the term "His Majesty" and reduced him to the title, "the present King of Britain." He liked the high spirit of the paper, appreciated how truly great were his young colleague's words. The Congress would make him omit a good deal, he warned Jefferson ; probably they would delete the very best passages. But all parts of it were good. Frank-



lin saw it and made a few corrections, for Franklin was a man very precise with words, as so able a writer was bound to be. The other members of the committee approved, and it was laid before the Congress for members to read at their leisure. On this great second of July it came up for real examination.

Jefferson sat in misery, hearing his phrases repeated, twisted, questioned, turned inside out. Could this passage be misconstrued, was that one too severe, had this other a sufficiently dignified sound? Was this one too mild or that one too abusive? Would our friends in England be offended by this paragraph or, as Jefferson himself most seriously questioned, would we have any friends still left after this declaration?

Franklin, sitting beside him, tried to comfort the suffering author and attempted to distract his attention, but it is probable that Jefferson heard very little of the story of John Thompson who made hats. But the fact that Franklin realized what he was feeling was, at least, some support to him. Adams's prophecy that many of the most spirited passages would be cut out was in a fair way to be fulfilled. Through three sessions the painful process went on, but the result was a document at which few of the most severe critics can cavil. From Jefferson's notes it is possible to gather what was rejected, some of it for the sake of brevity, some for expediency, lest it alienate friends in England or violate certain feelings at home. His denunciation of the slave trade and of the slave markets was resisted at once by South Carolina and Georgia, although Jefferson hinted later that even New England, having a considerable interest in the carrying trade, did not feel qualified to cast a stone against the practice. The terms describing the breaking of the bonds with Britain as "an everlasting Adieu," "an eternal separation," were deleted. "Eternal" was an appalling word, and these men felt themselves to be dealing with more human periods of time.

"We might have been a free and a great people together—" How could they have cut that without a pang? But it savored

of looking back, and all faces were set firmly forward now. At the end, instead of Jefferson's own summary concerning separation, it was decided to introduce the wording of Richard Henry Lee's resolution :

"We solemnly publish and declare that these United Colonies are and of right ought to be free and independent States, that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain is and ought to be totally dissolved." Once more the British government's own words, their legalistic phrases, were used to define, not autocracy of colonial rule, but the freedom of a new country.

In spite of the changes, the real form of Jefferson's own composing stood and will stand forever. It was the culmination of those earlier declarations : To the People of Great Britain, To the Inhabitants of Quebec, On taking up Arms, explaining, as each step was taken, what America was doing and why. Those explanations, marking, each one of them, a great moment, are as beautiful and as lasting as the marble shafts that have been set up on the great battlefields. And Jefferson's opening paragraph, holding all the truth of democracy in its single content : the rights of men, inalienable and permanent ; the protection of those rights ; governments deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed ; the defense of the people in the privilege of instituting new governments when the old one became destructive of its proper ends—no one could pretend that these were stated in less than inspired terms. The long list of usurpations of men's right by "the present King of Great Britain" was acknowledged by the Congress to be beyond question, although the inciting of slaves to insurrection was passed over as not fully proven, and a few of the accusations of tyranny were a little softened. By the afternoon of the third session of debate, on the fourth of July, a day cool and clear as only a perfect summer day in Pennsylvania can be, the Committee of the Whole, with Benjamin Harrison presiding, reported agreement. And the Declaration, as Charles

Thomson put down in the Journal, was accordingly "delivered in."

John Adams recorded that as he looked about he could see dismay on some faces, anxiety on others, even terror on certain countenances. For himself he felt no more bitterness, no more sense of struggle, no triumph even, only deep content. And there was not one of those men present who, in spite of his misgivings, in spite of the great and looming danger immediately before them, was not willing to step forward and put his name to the document which, in their common wisdom, they had made ready to set before the world. The effort of decision had been greater for some than for others. The family of John Morton declared that his inner battle was the real cause of his death, not many months later. It was the deciding which was difficult, not the supporting, later, of that independence to which they had pledged not only lives and fortunes—as a subject was bound to do to his sovereign—but their sacred honor. With the decision once made there was, for all of them, a deep and tremendous relief, a happiness that grew as the tidings extended to those who waited outside, as the news went racing through town and village and countryside, setting the bells ringing, the bonfires blazing, and the statues of King George toppling.

The whole order of a past age was sliding into the realm of discarded and forgotten things. It was the final end of long, brave effort in establishing a new world, going back to those men who had girded their courage and set sail for America facing cold and starvation, facing peril from storms, from pestilence, from a hostile wilderness, each man looking forward to something better for his children, something better still for his children's children. When the crack of the first long rifle opened the engagement of Lexington and Concord, echoing and re-echoing as rifle shots do, it was said to be heard round the world. But it may be that the Liberty Bell, ringing that July day in the belfry above, was heard in heaven.

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## CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

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### 1774

- May 10* Boston Port Bill brought to Boston.  
*May 13* Boston town meeting held to move appeal to the other colonies for nonintercourse with Britain.  
*May 14* Paul Revere dispatched with message to the other colonies.  
*May 19* Paul Revere arrived in Philadelphia.  
*May 20* Citizens meet at the City Tavern.  
*May 27* The dissolved House of Burgesses of Virginia issues its Declaration from the Raleigh Tavern, Williamsburg.  
*June 28* General public meeting held in the State House yard, Philadelphia.  
*September 5* First Session of the Continental Congress opened in Carpenter's Hall. Peyton Randolph President.  
*September 18* The Suffolk Resolves approved by Congress.  
*September 27* The Association for Nonimportation agreed on in principle.  
*September 27* Joseph Galloway's Plan of Union presented.  
*October 20* Association for Nonimportation signed.  
*October 21* Declaration to the People of Great Britain approved.  
*October 22* Henry Middleton elected President.  
*October 22* Galloway Plan of Union rejected.  
*October 26* The Petition to the King signed.  
*October 26* Congress adjourned.  
*November 29* The Fourteenth British Parliament opened by the King.

### 1775

- January 19* The American Papers with the Petition to the King debated in the House of Commons.  
*January 20* The American Papers debated in the House of Lords. Chatham's motion for the recall of British troops from America rejected.  
*February 1* Chatham's Motion for Conciliation rejected.  
*February 2* Proposal to declare Massachusetts in rebellion debated by the House of Commons and passed.  
*February 7* Proposal to declare Massachusetts in rebellion debated by the House of Lords and passed.  
*February 20* Lord North's Conciliatory Motion passed by the House of Commons.

## 1775 (cont.)

- March 21* Franklin sails for America.  
*March 22* Burke's Motion for Conciliation rejected.  
*March 27* Hartley's Motion for Conciliation rejected.  
*April 19* Battle of Lexington and Concord fought.  
*May 10* Ticonderoga captured by Ethan Allen and Benedict Arnold. Second Session of Congress opened in Philadelphia. Peyton Randolph President.  
*May 24* John Hancock elected President of Congress.  
*June 15* Motion for a continental army passed and Washington elected Commander-in-Chief.  
*June 17* Battle of Bunker Hill fought.  
*June 22* Issue of \$2,000,000 in bills of credit approved.  
*June 23* Washington, Lee and Schuyler set off from Philadelphia.  
*July 6* Declaration on Taking up Arms approved.  
*July 8* Second Petition to the King signed.  
*July 25* A further \$1,000,000 added to the approved issue.  
*July 26* A postal system organized.  
*August 1* Congress adjourned for recess.  
*September 13* Congress reassembled. John Hancock President.  
*September 18* Secret committee for importing gunpowder organized.  
*October 5* Committee for intercepting armed vessels organized.  
*October 22* Peyton Randolph dies.  
*November 7* Second Petition to the King rejected by the House of Lords.  
*November 12* Montreal captured by Montgomery.  
*November 16* Reconciliation with America rejected by the House of Commons.  
*November 29* Emission of \$3,000,000 in bills of credit approved. Secret committee for correspondence abroad organized.  
*December 26* Emission of \$3,000,000 in bills of credit approved.  
*December 31* General Montgomery killed and his troops defeated before Quebec.

## 1776

- January 8* *Common Sense* published.  
*January 9* Wilson's Motion for Repudiating Independence approved.  
*January 17* News of the death of Montgomery announced in Congress.  
*February 15* Commissioners to Canada selected.  
*February 17* Emission of \$4,000,000 in bills of credit approved.  
*March 17* Boston evacuated by the British.  
*March 25* The commissioners set out for Canada.  
*April 6* The ports opened to trade other than with Britain.

1776 (cont.)

- May 9* Emission of \$5,000,000 in bills of credit approved.
- May 15* The May Resolutions passed, advocating new governments for the colonies.  
The Virginia Convention passes instructions to their delegates to propose independence.
- May 21* George Merchant arrives with secret dispatches from England.
- May 24* Washington confers with Congress.
- June 7* Resolutions for Independence proposed by Richard Henry Lee. Seconded by Adams and Wythe.
- June 8* Resolutions for Independence debated.
- June 10* Consideration of the Resolutions for Independence postponed to July 1.
- June 11* A committee for writing a Declaration of Independence elected.  
The commissioners to Canada return.
- June 14* The Assembly of Pennsylvania alters its instructions to its delegates.
- June 15* The Assembly of Delaware forms a new government and alters its instructions to its delegates.
- June 24* Congress orders the arrest of Governor William Franklin.
- June 28* The Maryland Convention issues new instructions to its delegates.
- June 30* General Howe's transports sighted off Sandy Hook.
- July 1* The Resolutions for Independence debated by the Committee of the Whole.
- July 2* The Resolutions for Independence unanimously approved by Congress.  
The Declaration of Independence debated.
- July 3* The Declaration debated.
- July 4* The Declaration approved.
- August 2* The Declaration of Independence, engrossed on parchment, signed by the members of Congress.





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# THE DOCUMENTATION

*for the foregoing study*

*is contained in*

*the following*

## NOTES

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8. Details of the country to be observed on approaching Philadelphia in the autumn of 1774. Letter of Silas Deane to Mrs. Deane, Sept. 6, 1774. Deane Papers, I, 11, 12.
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